

## Author, Author

## Competition No 137

Readers are invited to identify the source of the three quotations which follow and to send us the answers so that they reach this office not later than September 16. A prize of £10 is offered for the first correct set of answers opened on that date, or failing that the most nearly correct - in which case inspired guesswork will also be taken into consideration.

Entries, marked "Author, Author 137" on the envelope, should be addressed to the Editor, *The Times Literary Supplement*, Priory House, St John's Lane, London EC1M 4BX. The solution and results will appear on September 23.

1 This Poem was chiefly written upon the mountainous ruins of the Baths of Caracalla, among the flowery glades, and thickets of odoriferous blossoming trees, which are extending in ever winding labyrinths upon the immense

platforms and dizzy arches suspended in the sky.

2 We viewed the celebrated Forum. I experienced sublime and melancholy emotions as I thought of all the great affairs which had taken place there, and saw the place now all in ruins, with the wretched huts of carpenters and other artisans occupying the site of that rostrum from which Cicero had flung forth his stunning eloquence.

3 It was among the ruins of the Capitol that I first conceived the idea of a work which has amused and exercised near twenty years of my life.

Competition No 133  
Winner: John Lavagnino

## Answers:

1 One day the nouns were clustered in the Street.  
An Adjective walked by, wither dark beauty.

## Fifty years on: Northern influences

The TLS of August 24, 1933 carried the following review of William Craigie's *The Northern Element in English Literature*:

These Alexander Lectures, delivered at the University of Toronto by one of the greatest of living Scottish scholars, discuss what seems at first sight the surprising fact that the specifically "northern" strain in English and even in Lowland Scottish letters is, until modern times, so remarkably slight. Sir William suggests that the cause of this is twofold: on the one hand ignorance, on the other dislike (causes, one might add, which not infrequently reinforce each other in producing the undesirable forms of nationalism). Gaelic and Norse have never been international tongues, as were French and still more Latin until quite lately. (And the late-imperial horror of the North probably influenced later Latin tradition - not inexplicably in Scotland, where even into the later thirteenth century Scandinavia was as great a menace as England.) In England the nearer North was no less unpopular, for reasons that

are obvious: a little country that refused to be conquered must have a "devilish disposition" not to "love or favour an Englishman."

It is not until the late sixteenth century that this attitude begins to show a change. Sir William dates it from the success of the English edition of Gavin Douglas (1554), who as uncle-in-law of an English princess might be considered certified as respectable. He might perhaps have taken into account the influence of the Succession Question in giving topical interest to the Scots-Latin historians, whose English translations were a good deal read. The further North began to be studied seriously in the next century, and by the eighteenth Scots and even Scandinavian influence was becoming powerful in England. Percy and Gray and Ramsay in pure letters, Martin, Bury, Pennant, and Johnson for Scotland. Debes, Scheffer, Pontoppidan and Horrebow for Scandinavia, brought in a whole new range of subject and "colour." The strong influence of Scots science and philosophy during the brilliant Scots

Risorgimento is not mentioned, but it doubtless contributed.

Even in Northern England and Lowland Scotland one finds the earlier literature turning South. It is possible, however, to find there definitely Northern characteristics; but here Sir William comes on more dubious ground. One is surprised that a scholar of such eminence should generalize on early Scots literature to a foreign audience without the warning that, thanks to that country's strange and tragic history, we have only the broken remnants of old Scots culture. Between the late thirteenth century and the Civil War we know of some thirty named authors whose works are completely or almost completely lost; and we cannot infer that they were necessarily insignificant, for the exquisite work of Alexander Scott has come down through the chance survival of one copy, and even Dunbar by scarcely more of a margin. And the statement that "Scottish literature begins with Barbour," though a popular cliché, is not less than startling here.

## Among this week's contributors

ROSEMARY ASHTON's book on George Eliot in Oxford University Press's Post Masters series will be published in October.

HUGH BROGAN's *The Times Reports the American Civil War* was published in 1975.

IAN CAMPBELL's most recent book is *Kilgobbin: An assessment*, 1982.

PATRICK CARNEY is the author of *Faust as Musician: A Study of Thomas Mann's Novel 'Doctor Faustus'*, 1973.

NEIL CORCORAN is a lecturer in English at the University of Sheffield.

JIM CRACE's collection of stories, *Content*, will be published shortly.

LAWRENCE FREEMAN is the author of *The Evolution of Nuclear Strategy*, 1982.

RICHARD GREGORY's most recent book is *Mind in Science*, 1981.

JOHN GROSS is the editor of *The Oxford Book of Aphorisms*, 1983.

CHRISTOPHER HARVEY's books include *Scotland and Nationalism: Scottish Society and Politics, 1707-1977*, 1977.

JAMES HUNTER is the author of *The Making of the Crofting Community*, 1976.

ROBERT IAWIN's *The Monheuk Sultanate 1250-1577* will be published later this year.

ANOLA LIVINGSTONE is Reader in Literature at the University of Essex.

JOHN LEVETT's first collection of poems, *Chonging Sides*, was published earlier this year.

AVISHAI MARGALIT is Professor of Philosophy at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

EDWARD MENDELSON's *Early Auden* was published in 1981. He is Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University.

RISAIINO MITCHISON is Professor of Social History at the University of Edinburgh.

OSWYN MURRAY is the author of *Early Greece*, 1980.

OTTO PICK is Pro-Vice Chancellor and Professor of International Relations at the University of Surrey.

SIR EDWARD PLAYFAIR was Chairman of the National Gallery from 1972 to 1974.

MICHAEL PODRO's *The Manifold in Perception: Theories of Art from Kant to Hildebrand* was published in 1972.

ROY PORTER's most recent book, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, was published last year.

NICHOLAS RESCHER is co-author of *The Logic of Inconsistency: A Study in Non-Standard Possible-World Semantics and Ontology*, 1980.

GRAHAM REYNOLDS's complete catalogue of the work of John Constable, 1817-1837, will be published next year.

MALCOLM SCHOFIELD's *An Essay on Anaxagoras* was published in 1980.

ANNE SMITH's novel, *The Magic Glass*, won the Author's Club Award for first novels in 1982.

F. M. L. THOMPSON is the editor of *The Rise of Suburbia*, 1982.

HUGH TORRENS is a lecturer in Geology at the University of Keele.

P. J. VATHAKOTIS's books include *The Modern History of Egypt*, 1969.

DAVID WALKER is Principal Inspector of Historic Buildings, Scotland, and co-author of *The Architecture of Glasgow*, 1968.

MALCOLM YAFF's *Strategies of British India: Iran and Afghanistan 1798-1808* was published in 1980.

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# TLS

## THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

FRIDAY • 2 SEPTEMBER 1983 • No 4,196 • 50p

### Robert Wokler on Jean-Jacques Rousseau

### Economics and growth

### The fictions of Italo Calvino



A study by Balbus for the set of Antonin Artaud's play *The Cenci* (based on Shelley and Stendhal) presented at the Théâtre des Folies Wagram, Paris, 1935; reproduced from Giovanni Corandini's *Balbus: Drawings and Watercolours* (120pp, with 138 illustrations, 27 in colour, Thames and Hudson, £15.00 0 500 09163 3).

## THEATRE

## Pat Rogers on John Gay

Stanley Wells, Eric Sams, Inga-Stina Ewbank and P. N. Furbank: Shakespeare and the stage

## Simon Gray on reviewers

Versions of Marat  
Chekhov's reputation  
Peter Hall and the National  
Lennox Robinson  
Russell Davies: the Cambridge Footlights







## Keeping up the studio spirit

Richard Cottrell

LYUBA VENDROVSKAYA and  
GALINA KAPTEREVA  
Evgeny Vakhtangov  
Translated by Doris Bradbury  
271pp. Central Books. £4.95.  
7147 1913 7

Evgeny Vakhtangov (1883-1922) was an important figure in the early Soviet theatre. A contemporary of Meyerhold, he worked in Moscow in that extraordinarily innovative period before the deadening hand of Stalin's socialist realism stifled the creative spirits with which the early post-revolutionary years abounded. However - rather like Gordon Craig - his enormous reputation is founded on very little actual work. Vakhtangov is remembered for no more than half-a-dozen productions (he rehearsed *Rosmersholm* for two years) but as a teacher he was more than active. A protégé of Stanislavski and of Nemirovich-Danchenko, he created and ran the second studio at the Moscow Arts Theatre and then taught and directed at other "studios" as well, greatly expanding and developing Stanislavski's theories.

His workload was enormous. Starting at noon, he appears to have worked with barely a break through to one the following morning. Not

surprisingly perhaps, he was often and seriously ill, spending much time in hospital and finally dying, after a series of operations, at the age of thirty-nine.

As I read, with some difficulty, this memoir, I realized with a shock that I had actually seen one of Vakhtangov's productions: one of the studio groups with whom he worked in Moscow in the 1920s was the Habimah Studio Theatre and for them Vakhtangov directed Ansky's *The Dybbuk*. When, in the happy days of the World Theatre Season, the Habimah Theatre of Israel came to London, their repertoire included Vakhtangov's production of *The Dybbuk*, then some fifty years old, with its business, scenery and costumes still intact. Also intact, alas, was its style of acting. It was a truly terrible evening - flapping, shaking scenery, untruthful, melodramatic acting. Seventy years ago, no doubt Vakhtangov's *Dybbuk* was filled with dynamism but it's the glory and the sadness of the theatre that it's a totally ephemeral art.

So one can have little idea of what Vakhtangov's work was really like; and will not be further enlightened after reading this work. The book is divided into two halves: extracts from Vakhtangov's diaries, letters, production notebooks; and a series of appreciative essays by people with whom he worked. From his own writings, Vakhtangov emerges as

rather an unlikable character, always getting in a frightful tizz about the way his students carried on and continually sending them exhortations on the need to maintain "the studio spirit", much in the manner of an absent games master. Some areas spark recognition: "how dare the prop boys disregard my remarks in setting up the scenes?" and when he's lying in hospital waiting to be operated on, you hear the man himself, speaking in simple, moving monosyllables. The polysyllabic raptures on art are far harder to take and not essentially very far removed from the lyrical poems to "my tractor" which make the work of later Soviet dramatists merely risible to Western audiences.

With the extracts from his notebooks, there's a whiff of a real creative imagination at work. On *Rosmersholm*: "I simply cannot see painted sets, however hard I try... heavy, sombre depressing, draped cloth... heavy with the dust of centuries... It stands for silence and order, severity and steadfastness, cruelty and rigidity of purpose... a room of enormous proportions. Nothing new except flowers." This is the kind of vision all directors need, and seek, to move them and their colleagues into the world of the play.

Oddly, though he had a tremendous reverence for Stanislavski and

Nemirovich-Danchenko, he didn't care for their work and, of directors, it was Meyerhold whom he most admired. He wrote of him: "each production of his is a new form of theatre" and went on to say: "Stanislavski is a less talented director... all naturalists are alike and a stage work by one could be taken for a production by another. Meyerhold is original... he has provided roots for the theatre of the future... Stanislavski theatre is already dead... I am happy at this. Stronge, I now find it unobscured to recall *The Three Sisters* and *The Cherry Orchard*. *Julius Caesar* which stunned me at the time - is now repulsive to me." This gives one of the few clues provided by this book as to what Vakhtangov's own work must have been like. Somehow, in his criticisms of Stanislavski, a whole period comes alive and we, who are brought up to reverence the Moscow Arts Theatre, are suddenly in the world of Meyerhold, of the constructivists, of Bulgakov's wonderful satirical novel, *Black Snow*, of Zamyatin's science fiction classic, *We*.

These facets of Vakhtangov make one want to know more and from the biographical essays in the last part of the book another figure emerges - filled with a vast vitality, a boundless enthusiasm, an unflagging energy, idolized by his students and actors.

"Probably the first thing a student of Vakhtangov's felt was an enormous gratitude for the almost fanatical passion for art and creativity he exuded. Vakhtangov gave us wings, he drew us away from our everyday, petty concerns, fired our imagination and urged us into the future... he understood life as ceaseless creation and art as one form in which man's creative urge expressed itself." Also a man with his feet firmly planted on the ground: "our rehearsals were often stopped with the words 'I don't understand what you're saying. I don't understand what you're doing.' A man, too, of great humility - it was very important to him that Stanislavski and Nemirovich-Danchenko saw his work - though, disapproving of his outside commitments, they hardly ever saw anything of his that was not for the Moscow Arts - and he called Meyerhold 'Master'."

After one has ploughed through the inept and awkward English translation, there are small hints of a man and of a talent, but the whole turns out to have been a literary mirage because there's nothing which fully describes any of the productions. Of course his theories and his teaching have had considerable influence on Soviet theatre but it's by the living theatrical experience that the shadows of the theatre are remembered.

## Innovation and reaction

Jennifer Uglov

VICTOR EMELIANOV (Editor)  
Chekhov - The Critical Heritage  
471pp. Routledge & Kegan Paul.  
£17.50.  
0 7100 0374 9

This volume of the Critical Heritage deals with the reception of Chekhov in England and America, from the first mention of his work in articles on Russian literature in the 1890s to the respectful, familiar, reviews of plays which had attained the status of intellectual public property by the mid-1940s.

Although the time-span of the collection is limited, Victor Emelianov has gathered over 230 pieces, ranging from short notices such as the laconic *Times* obituary ("He was not unsuccessful as a dramatist") to the substantial reflective pieces which gradually worked towards a definition of Chekhov's meaning and appeal to Anglophone readers and audiences. Among these seminal pieces fall Maurice Baring's essays in the *New Quarterly* in 1907-8, E. M. Forster's *New Statesman* review of the short stories in 1915, Middleton Murry's essay "Thoughts on Chekhov" in which he reflects on the problem of Chekhov's "unfity" to 1920, Storm Jameson's exploration of his "new form" in the same year. In 1903, the year of R. C. Long's translation of some of his short stories, and in the appraisal after his death in 1904, Chekhov's critics were beginning to divide into disdainful opponents who derided what they saw as his "hopeless quietism" and his "strange assemblage of neurotics, lunatics and semi-lunatics" and partisan supporters like Christian Brinton, the art critic, who drew attention to his often unremarked humour: "He recorded life with a mocking tenderness, a mixture of satire and sadness, which has no parallel in the literature of his own, or any country."

The intense hostility faded, assuaged by better translations and more sensitive productions, although ripples of dislike endure throughout the period. But unswerving critical debates arose only through the notices of these forty years - discussion of Chekhov as a chronicler or satirist of Russian pre-revolutionary society, debates about his pessimism and determinism; arguments about his lack of political commitment; dissections of the relation between his "novel" naturalism and his poetic form; between the accuracy and fragmentation of dialogue or the photographic detail of the stories and the impressionism of the complete

work. But in this selection literary criticism is firmly subordinated, none the less, to criticism of the plays in production. This may be partly due to the particular interest of the editor, a drama specialist, whose subsequent work has included an interesting study on Komisarjevsky's London productions of Chekhov and who makes remarkably dismissive statements about the possibilities for purely formal or thematical criticism: "The response to a short story, however, is a personal one, and the only argument can ultimately be about the taste of the individual reader or, for that matter, the individual publisher."

A better reason for the focus on performance in this period would have been that several of the most thoughtful and pioneering assessments of Chekhov's art came from critics responding to individual productions; for instance the discussion of his universality in the theatre reviews of Stark Young in *New York*, or James Agate and the devoted Chekhovian Desmond MacCarthy in London. A fine example of reflective response to a theatrical experience is, of course, Virginia Woolf's piece in *The New Statesman* in 1920 on the "atmosphere" of *The Cherry Orchard*.

And, given time, something might be said in greater detail of the causes which produced this atmosphere - the strange dislocated sentences, each so erratic and yet cutting out the shape so firmly, of the realism, of the humour, of the artistic unity. But let the atmosphere be taken literally to mean that Chekhov has contrived to shed over us a luminous vapour in which life appears as it is, without veils, transparent and visible to the depths. Long before the play was over, we seemed to have sunk below the surface of things and to be feeling our way among submerged but recognisable emotions.

In more specific terms of theatre history this volume is valuable for the sheer bulk of the well-documented material it contains and for its demonstration of the complicated links between critical theory, stage practice and public taste. The superficial pattern of absorption seems a familiar one - from being judged as odd, foreign, peculiar, to being adopted by the intellectual avant-garde, rapidly followed by the fashionable metropolitan audiences and finally becoming part of an established popular "classical" canon. But the detailed stage history reveals a more subtle movement, which undercuts such surface patterns. As with the reception of Brecht in this country it seems that the comprehension of Chekhov's form followed, rather than led to, changes in acting technique - that indeed theatre audiences responded

with excitement to what they had heard of the new approaches of the Moscow Arts Theatre, or later the Belvoir Ensemble, and looked to the dramatists for material to experiment with. Emelianov describes this process most succinctly in his preface: "In the period to 1919 it was usually described as impossibly static. But in the period from 1920, as demands for a new theatre practice grew more insistent, so the plays of Chekhov came to be regarded as vehicles whereby a new form of acting and staging might be realised." Similarly the wider popularity of Chekhov in the 1930s and 1940s reflected not so much a gradual education of public taste as the movement of a devoted public, following their stage and screen idols, who saw the plays as offering exciting performance possibilities.

An underlying result of the concentration on the stage history rather than on criticism of the texts apart from performance, of the short stories, is therefore to give the book a triple orientation, so that it functions as criticism of Chekhov's writing, as a history of the changing currents of public taste. The rather plodding introduction, divided into periods and subdivided into descriptions of the response to performances, smacks of lecture notes and of doctoral theses (generously acknowledged) which have doubtless chronicled every possible variation in cast lists and lighting to every discoverable production. But despite the pedestrian pace of Emelianov's survey, his carefully chosen extracts guide us through, elaborately convoluted channels, of innovation, reaction and adaptation, and the total effect of the book is less of a weary reference tool than of a dense, disconnected narrative of a fascinating episode of cultural history.

Volume XV of the New Series of *Oxford Slavonic Papers*, edited by I. P. Fote, J. L. I. Fenelon, and G. C. Stone. 167pp. Oxford University Press. £17.50. 0 19 815658 8, contains contributions from Simon Franklin, T. A. Greenan, Igor Vihogradoff, A. O. Cross, Mark Alfassler, Pamela Davidson, Svetlana Koljajic and J. S. G. Simmons. Simon Franklin writes on "Some Anonymous Sources of Kievan Russian 'Historiography'". T. A. Greenan on "The seventeenth century *Life of Ivanova, Lavrentevskaya*". Vihogradoff introduces extracts from the *Contraband Papers* relating to Russian immigrants to London, 1711-89; and A. O. Cross discusses a "burlesque, directly major tradition in English poetry - homage to foreign princes, and specifically to Russian tsars", which flourished in the fifteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

## A place in the country

Katharine Worth

LENNOX ROBINSON

Selected Plays: Irish Drama Selections  
1. Introduction by Christopher Murray.  
296pp. Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe. £12.50 (paperback, £3.50).  
0 8132 0574 3

"Lennox Robinson came, thin and languid, but anxious for the management if he could arrange with Horace Plunkett to let him keep a part of the Carnegie Library work." Thus Lady Gregory, recording in 1919 the return to the fold of Lennox Robinson after a four-year break from his job as general manager at the Abbey Theatre.

This account hints at a rather curious personality: purposeful and indecisive, hard-working and "languid". He was curious to look at - immensely tall ("the mysterious elongation of a giraffe", said one observer) yet of one time only eight stone in weight - and though hardly belligerent, capable of arousing strong dislikes as well as liking. He was always "Thot Robinson" to Miss Horman, the Abbey Theatre's formidable English patron, after his maladroit début as manager in 1910, when he allowed performances to take place on the day of Edward VII's funeral, enraging her to the point of firing the theatre by a cut in their subsidy. He was the soul of versatility; manager and later director, producer (a good one: O'Casey wanted him for *The Plough and the Stars*) and prolific playwright who helped, with his comedies of Irish provincial life especially, to underpin the Abbey's always precarious economy.

What kind of plays were written by this interesting character? We can pursue the question more easily now that the *Selected Plays* (chosen by Christopher Murray) have been published by the angel of Anglo-Irish studies, Colin Smythe, and the Catholic University Press of America. This is the first volume in a welcome new series of selected works by Irish dramatists which have long been out of print. The masters of the Irish theatre, Yeats, Synge, O'Casey, have always attracted the lion's share of attention, but they need the context supplied by the lesser lights - who, indeed, may now prove to be brighter than we had realized.

Lennox Robinson deserves his place as the opener of the series, if only because of his pivotal role in the Abbey Theatre. Appointed general manager at the age of twenty-three, he had already made a small stir there with his first play, *The Cluny Name* (1908), a one-act piece about the rage for respectability which makes the mother of a son who has committed a murder cato about nothing, even when her son is dying, except the preservation of the family name. The young writer had been inspired by a visit of the Abbey company to Cork, his home town, for the first time he saw on the stage "the real Irish life... It came on me in a flash, as a revelation, that play-material could be found outside one's own door, at one's own fireside". *The Cluny Name* launched him, with Sara Allgood "magnificent" in the leading part and a reviewer obliging with the kind of shock and outrage that helps to put an Irish playwright on the map: "the whole thing is a shame and a disgrace... a representative family whose name has been so flagrantly and gratuitously mentioned in connection with this so-called play..."

Uncomfortable closeness to real life was among the hazards attending the vocation of "Cork realism" to which Robinson was true throughout his long career. Of the plays in the volume under review, only one, *Church Street* (1934), ventures into formal experiment - a sub-Pirandellian exploration of a young playwright's approach to his "material". Hugh Robinson's contemptuous of the prosaic provincial life in his parents' home until his aunt teaches him to look more closely, behind the commonplace facade, he creates an alter ego who moves invisibly among the "real" characters, arranging them like a director, setting up scenes in which tragic realities are revealed, such as the carefully concealed starvation of two elderly sisters.

No doubt, as Christopher Murray suggests, Robinson knew he was thought by some of his friends to have got rather stuck in an Ibsenist mould. But the real driving force behind the *Church Street* experiment seems to have been the need to justify realism and the choice of the drab urban lives which had so little appeal for Yeats or Synge, or even Lady Gregory.

One has to be impressed by Lennox Robinson's tenacity in keeping to the métier he so early recognized, despite the mighty influences against. Yeats detested Ibsenist realism; Robinson was one of Yeats's most devoted followers, yet he continued to produce plays like *Patriots* (1912) which he himself came to find "so old, so out-of-date", looking back at it in 1942, in his autobiography, *Curtain Up*. We are bound to agree, even perhaps to feel more dubious than he did about the virtues he felt he could still see in it,



twenty years on: "precise construction, the tightness of its dialogue... the humour springing out of character." But if time has taken away, it has also in a curious way added, to this play the return of the ardent nationalist from prison, who finds total apathy towards the cause in his home town, has acquired a formidable irony through recent history. This is true of other plays in the volume, notably *The Big House* (1926).

One of the virtues Robinson identified, "the humour springing out of character", is the source of success in his most popular play, *The Whiteheaded Boy*: in cupbolic moments he wondered whether it might not be the best Irish comedy since *She Stoops to Conquer*, and might live as long. Radiant now one can see both why it was a huge success with audiences - at one time it received more performances than *The Playboy of the Western World* - and why it has not actually rivalled *She Stoops to Conquer* in staying power. It is a witty comedy about a family embittered by the mother's sacrifice of their chance to her "whiteheaded boy" and the trouble they get into when, after he has failed his examinations once again, they try to pack him off to Canada, keeping up the family name while by spinning tall stories about the great job he is going out to. They overreach themselves, bringing on the threat of a breach-of-promise action, and from then on the farcical complications thicken, with bribes and counter-bribes passing among them, while Aunt Ellen, who has missed marriage through her "notions", ends up with oodles of money in hand and a husband into the bargain.

"Wish, God help you, John Duffy," says one of the luckless daughters when the curtain falls on this dénouement. "And she's right," adds the playwright, in one of the wry whimsical comments that are scattered through the play and give it, as Christopher Murray says, a distinctive quality - though perhaps not one that modern audiences will easily respond to, any more than they respond nowadays to the charm of J. M. Barrie.

It is not surprising that Sean O'Casey admired this play; he thought it a "glorious" work, though his own more dionysian farce makes his predecessor's seem somewhat tame in comparison. Yet O'Casey's praise remains understandable. He retraced it in later days, but that was in the aftermath of the rejection of *The Silver Tassie*; he could never quite forgive "Links", as he called him, for his share in that traumatic event ("cultured sneakiness" was his phrase for it). It was certainly an unhappy demonstration of Lennox Robinson's preference for realism. He could see that O'Casey was groping (his word) towards a new manner in the astonishing masterpiece, but he could not stomach the mixture of styles ("the realism of the first act and the unrealism of the second"). He went so far as to suggest to Lady Gregory that the play could be improved by an alternative ending in which the action returned to the tenement setting, instead of the wild and terrible dance-hall scene. It seems terrible to think that this over-confidence should have co-existed with self-doubt; he was relieved that Lady Gregory, independently of him, rejected the play; otherwise, he told her, he would have suspected himself of "all sorts of horrid subconscious feelings".

Painful incidents such as this illustrate the difficulty of Lennox Robinson's position; a writer of talent surrounded by writers of genius, who yet often depended on him to realize their imaginings on the stage. He also shared with Yeats and Lady Gregory in the peculiar destiny, as he himself saw it, of being Anglo-Irish. "This strange Irish thing has been the commanding force in my life," he said in the closing lines of his autobiography. He was born into a large country house just outside Cork City; when he was six years old his father "surprisingly" changed from being a stockbroker in Cork to being a Church of Ireland curate. *The Big House*, one of the most interesting plays in this volume, has a heroine who takes "fabulous Protestant parson" to task for letting his Protestant religious slip through their fingers, as her family have let the house, Ballinacorney, slip through theirs, by not seeing that it was necessary to fight for it. This is one of many allusions (the Carnegie Library Trust also got in) which make the author's personal experience overtly part of his documentation of historical events. For more fantastic form he makes similar autobiographical references in *Church Street* and *Drain in Irish* (1933), a rather odd seed-up of ban actors touring the provinces with Ibsen, Strindberg and the Russians and of the provincial audience who over-react to the thrilling new drama by throwing themselves off piers and making catastrophic public confessions. As Murray says, this is a case of the older playwright laughing at his younger, messianic self; a rather sad joke, it might appear.

Through the character of Kate Alcock in *The Big House* Robinson subtly explored the theme that so preoccupies him: the nature of Irishness. The daughter of an Irish father and an English mother, she passionately asserts her Irish identity through her devotion to the "house" and the Catholic community in the village and countryside nearby. A symbolic activity for her - as for the much-loved brother killed on Armistice Day at the start of the play - is learning the Irish language. She mocks her English tutor's stock notion of an Irish girl - "Peg o' my Heart, with April moods and so Irish terror under the arm - but is forced to realize that the genuine Irish identity she claims is precarious and unreal. The action moves through four traumatic episodes, from 1918 to 1923 when the

house is burned down by local nationalists. The worst moment for Kate is when she feels her family becoming irrelevant, "everything swooping past us and leaving us behind". But when three young men in trench coats give Kate and her parents five minutes to leave the house before they set fire to it, her sense of connection is restored. There is, after all, real feeling between the "big house" and the people, even if the feeling is one of fear and hostility. When her parents depart for Bourne-moat, her father admitting to having for years felt "like a bad actor cast for a part far too heroic for his talent", Kate resolves to stay on alone and fight for her place in the country she still feels is hers: "Ireland is not more theirs than ours".

In his use of a deteriorating, finally burnt-out house to represent the decline of a family and a class, Robinson anticipates Yeats's *Purgatory* (1938): that play opens with the Old Man and Boy, two generations of a family in decline, standing by the burnt-out ruin in which a ghost of the past is to appear. Robinson introduces a ghostly presence into his play too, that of the dead brother whose spirit cannot part from the house he loves. It does not work, and *The Big House* as a whole is unlikely, one would guess, to attract performances in today's theatre: the combination of strict topicality and strict naturalism does not commend it. Nevertheless admirers of Yeats's play should look to Robinson's, for provides in talking about 1930s. Recent developments, Samuel Beckett, contemporary writers including Hugh Leonard, Brian Friel, Eugene McCabe, Thomas Murphy, Thomas Kilroy and others, as well as chapters on Goldsmith, Sheridan, Wilde, Shaw, Synge and O'Casey and a select bibliography and index.

## HEINEMANN

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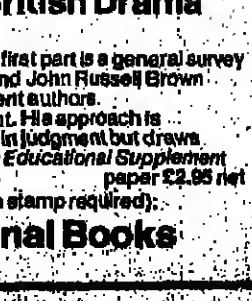
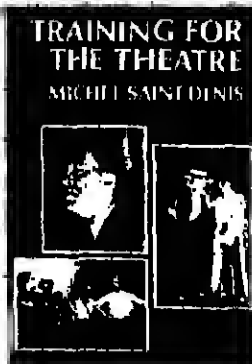
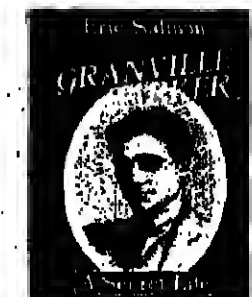
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## remainders

Eric Korn

You and I, of course, being persons of the world, would be unlikely to advance any money to one Colonel Graves, sometime Commander-in-Chief to the armies of the Queen of Madagascar, later Commander-in-Chief of the forces of Jacques Lebaudy, Emperor of the Sahara. Nor to the Comte de Toulouse-Lautrec (sic) nor to Deacon Hann Yuss of the tribe of Jilu. We would not be likely to rush our subs to the Anti-Expectation League, The National Thrift Society, The Children's Non-Socialist League; nor buy space in the Colonial Advertising Catalogue of the Britannia and International Language Co. — not even if, especially not if, solicited by an agent called Chmies Septimus Malpass, clearly the kind of villain who is hissed on every entrance, and snickers up his sleeve.

Nowadays we have television and radio to expose frauds, sharps, swindlers, bunco-steerers and flat-tops. But in 1913 they only had the admirable *Cannibals List of Truth* magazine to prevent people giving off their money to Mr H. Haverley, the Branded Man of Haverstock Hill, founder of the Aggressive Christian Union ("tells a cock-and-bull story about being kidnapped by papists and branded with an H on his forehead. The H may be taken as standing for 'humbly', to the London Institute for Lost and Starving Cats ("money collected is mainly expended on killing cats") or to the "gang of bogus bishops" who ran The Shaftesbury Memorial Shoeblack Outdoor Brigade for Homeless Destitute Deaf Dumb and Crippled Boys ("appeals among the most blasphemous and canting issued by any charity-monger").

*Truth Cannibals List* (It ran for many years) describes hundreds of bogus organizations, not often as candid as the man collecting for the Samuel Smiles Centenary (self-help begins at home), and individual hypocrites like George Brooks: "originally a Nonconformist Minister and a violent Radical. Became a still more violent Tory, self-constituted champion of property and vested interests generally. Addresses pathetic appeals to wealthy representatives of these classes, describing his personal and domestic distresses. Some not relieved, becomes abusive." Some preyed on deserving victims — like John T. Higgins ("improvident young heirs falling into the clutches of this vampire have been bled in the most

unscrupulous manner"), like P. Saunders of Savile Row, who claimed 418 per cent interest on a loan to a "wealthy inebriate"; or like the Société Académique d'Histoire Internationale, which would send you a gold medal and a diploma for twenty guineas. But many preferred to prey on the helpless, like the Children's Homes that maltreated their inmates, or Gibbs and Co who passed off over-priced sewing-machines to servant-girls and enforced payment with the "penny fire-engine" an imposing blue paper headed "Notice before proceeding to Law".

There were bogus share promoters and promoters of bogus shares, bogus biographers (Joshua Hatton, writing as Guy Roslyn, now reduced to poverty and begging from those he had biographed in the past), bogus printers and bogus editors of bogus papers, like *The Gentlewoman's Court Journal* and *The New Church Quarterly*, which existed only to collect review copies.

Medical frauds were numerous, even though The Aural Remedies Co had lost its chief consultant, Dr Clippens, since the 1910 edition; there was still Anitram and Antineurasthenin, Brainine for the brain and Crystolis for the hair, Antidipso or Eucrasia or Alcola for drunkenness, Madame Temple's Cure for Blushing, the Magic Fool Draft, and bust enhancement by Diano, the Institute Venus-Carnis and the Académie Neuzonic. The Brothers Gram advertised themselves as "human X-rays" while the Health and Vim Supply Co "undertakes to cure obnoxious diseases."

*Truth* was hard on Bernard and Jennie Barton of Bugsworth ("a married couple who carried on a disgusting business") and on the Reverend Basil Collet, "an inhibited clergyman, the whining note of whose appeals betrays the practised mendicant." I cannot withhold admiration from the New Seed Co, which promised for many years that "every day 40 readers who reply to this advert will receive £1" and was as good as its word: every day forty readers who replied and sent for 4s 9d worth of goods received £1. Which made sixpence each. But my favourite style of crook — and I suspect *Truth*'s — is the Seaside Lapidary "a class of persons who carry on a curious business by substituting real gems for worthless pebbles. The pebbles are picked up on the beach by people and sent to the lapidary, who returns to them, inexpensive gems, such as topazes and aquamarines, the price charged for cutting showing a profit to the lapidary. Surely this is not fraud but the acceptable face of something or other?"

\*\*\*  
"Computer to Run Marathon", jested the evening paper, evoking an image of a plucky British Acom (with salted cake software) struggling gamely on, its little legs going 191, only 14K but all heart, while foreign mainframes of doubtful polarity are crashing around it or being disqualified for illegally interfacing with a bus. Or the cybernetic pentathlon: chess, overcoming design hurdles, hurling the floppy discs, the sprint print-out, and carrying the cap for human error. But all is really meaningless, the Oracle Visions of the London Marathon have decided to abolish the pre-race training Marathon; and its prize of an entry for those who guessed which pillar box to queue in front of. This year a computer will evaluate the million or so replies to a questionnaire, designed, says C. Brasher, starting pistol in chief, grimly, to keep out the comedians — this time, definitely, no one dressed as the front legs of a centipede, no hoppers or hang gliders, no one campaigning for proportional representation of Eurasian Rights, no ex-officio novelists, pop ballads or singing waiters. I have sent an advance copy of the questionnaire. Name? Age? Sex? Number of miles per week in training? (I said per week, not per day. Do you realize that you will be competing against people about twice as fast as you? Do you intend to become paraplegic between now and the start of the race? Do you intend to wear a too-shirt with a vulgar advertising

slogan? Do you intend to wear running shoes with a distinctive tread? What other hobbies do you have (choose from the following): a) running in other marathons b) walking long distances extremely fast c) sprinting d) ultra-marathoning? Have you run in a marathon before? If yes, do you suppose this gives you any special claim? If no, do you suppose that this gives you any special claim? Now complete the following sentence: I deserve, above all, to run in the London Marathon because . . .

\*\*\*  
Apart from an occasional jog at speeds I should remember to call gerontological rather than geriatric, staggering along London's canals from Limehouse to Southall (a full Thames to Thames trot would be just under twenty-six and a quarter miles and does that suggest anything to the GLC's Office of Pastimes and Pleasures?), my own pleasures come from reading about it. Running books and magazines represent a kind of wholesome pornography, with the same combination of physical explicitness, fetishistic concentration on a single function, the encouragement of fantasies of endurance and achievement, the flinging of others into stereotyped submissive roles, excessive competitiveness, and a lack of appreciation of the whole person.

There is a notable difference of style across the Atlantic. US marathon mags are full of soft-focus photography, free verse using biochemical terminology, advertisements for high-tech, high-fashion, high-cost foot apparel and unexpectedly complex training gear; personal stereo to play you inspirational tapes so you'll be the first to know if you drop dead. There are in-depth interviews with Alan Sillitoe, and the revivalist favour of Dr George Sheehan; a born-again track-basher ("When I began running in my mid-40s, I rewrote my life-story. It has become a biography of pain"), who believes that athletes' sweat smells sweet, unlike the guilty apocrine sweat of the nervous sedentary. There is a genial polysexual sexism about it all (compare and contrast *Personal Best* and *Charlotte of Fire*); American long-distance runners, according to a survey not only fantasize about sex while running, they also fantasize about running Marathons during sex. British magazines on the other hand are less glittering, less faddy, less designed to stimulate expenditure, and largely given over to explanations of the English team's poor performance in various international events.

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*Flanagan's Run* by Tom McNab is the Bible, or rather the *Pilgrim's Progress* of the ultramarathoner, the one who thinks of twenty-six miles as a reasonable lap length. (A classical and athletic purist is planning to supersede the Marathon with the Spartathlon, on the grounds that Herodotus doesn't say anything about a run from Marathon, but he does say that Pheidippides ran from Athens to Sparta and arrived on the second day with enough breath to pray.) *Flanagan's Run* is a fictionalized account of the Boston 1990 "Boa Angles" to New York race, and is stylistically remarkable as the only novel I know of that gives every few chapters, a full list of the chief characters' plights and times. Other novels could do the same. At the end of eleven thousand miles in the lead, Ahab (USA) in second place just a harpoon's length ahead of Olofin (Fr. Polynesia) with the united Arab Emirates team still waiting to make the break. Jay Gatsby leading by a toe on the East-egg — West-egg leg, with Nemesis coming up fast on the inside.

\*\*\*  
Long-distance running is one of the most despatching Patton-like thrusts of the feminist advance: until a few years ago women were barely tolerated, like lady undergraduates at Oxford before the War; now they are equaling men's record times of a decade or so ago and enjoy moderately optimistic projections.

especially one based on the last Boston Marathon, shows them overtaking men before the turn of the millennium. There may yet be a macho backlash; but the admirable and combative Anna Coote was mistaken in attributing to sexist resentment the cat-calls that followed her around Hampstead Heath when she trained, and complaining about this in the *New Statesman*. I am neither female nor noble, but I encounter on my runs a deal of conversation, much supportive, but much not. (Small boys shout "Get those feet up", small girls, curiously, cry "Got a light?" or ask the time.) A comrade from *Time Out* put Ms Coote right, attributing all jeering to fat envy: then he had to face ludicrous criticism from what might be called the Wide Left, whining that all exercise was a bourgeois diversionary tactic, to encourage consumption, self-absorption and competition, and come the revolution there will be neither fat nor this, fast nor slow. From each according to his faculty, to each according to his speed, says I.

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I was sent some questions once by a man who wanted to start in the book business. They began:

1. Where can I find antiquarian books?

### Aquarius, Canadian issue

The avowed aim of Katherine Govier, guest editor of the Canadian special issue of *Aquarius* at Edlie Linden's generous request, was "to export a glimpse of all that is going on in Canada". Inevitably she has failed, though the attempt was laudable: the fourteen writers represented span three generations and at least five provinces. The issue is predictably strong to short stories, a form which English-Canadian writers have made something of a specialty; enough lively astute and well-crafted fiction has been included to suggest the richness of the story-telling tradition in Canada.

In its entirety, however, the issue (13/14, 144pp, £2.50) is far from satisfactory. The terse editorial by Katherine Govier makes no attempt to place her choice of writing in any

context, nor to discuss the radical growth of Canadian literature over the last twenty-five years. Amazingly, "all that is going on in Canada" turns out to exclude all writings in French, even in translation, as well as work by any English-language writers from the province of Quebec. Above all, the poems rarely match the quality of most of the prose. A few of them are simply bad. The anthology has yet to be compiled that would do justice to the best twelve or fifteen poets in Canada while granting silence to the many, many others. It should also be observed that Govier's ingenious remark, "Several of the poems and stories have appeared before in Canada", tells somewhat less than the truth; a more accurate phrase would have been "a clear majority".

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The first is in *Macbeth*. A "Prologue" stumblingly reads out the plot of the play, as retailed by Simon Forman, whereupon a bird-like punk who bursts from the auditorium to be to the (national) stage, quavering "E! troppo facile cominciare così" (It's too easy, beginning that way!). Furious, she or he grabs the clothes off *Macbeth*'s and Banquo's backs, soaks them in a vast washing-tub, and slaps them back on their shoulders, and by flashes of lightning we see the men wrestling with their dripping garments. So much for "So foul and fair a day" — like most of Shakespeare's metaphors treated literally here (it is, after all, going only one step further than Wilson Knight). The actors then retire to an open living-house at the back of the stage, to rub themselves down, while the action proceeds in other enclaves of the stage, which is partitioned off like a film-studio. A theatrical logic is apparent in this. It is not *Macbeth* Tremble live rabbits, nor Peter Hall's nude Rhinemaidens, for the consequences are faithfully

followed through. These are real people getting really wet and doing what people really have to do in such circumstances — change their clothes. This is a leading feature of this company's work: they are continually, and in full view, changing their costume — Polonius, for instance, hastily exchanging his fur-trimmed conjuror's overcoat for Laertes's scruffy and cockeyed Bersagliere rig-out. They take as their model the Players' scene in *Hamlet*, focus their *Henry IV* on the role-swapping scene, and allow their *Macbeth*, which has already shown a tendency to disintegrate, to wind up abruptly at the screaming into the modern world. If his work still has meaning for us it is simply as an irritation, or thorn in the flesh. I half take the sense of this, but only half; so let me plunge straight into the actual experience, three moments of it in particular.

Mark Abley

## Theatre about theatre

P. N. Furbank

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE  
*Hamlet, Macbeth, Henry IV*  
Riverside Studios, Hammersmith

According to the Compagnia del Collettivo di Parma, whose staging, in Italian, of *Hamlet, Macbeth* and *Henry IV* was part of the London International Festival of Theatre, it is no good asking Shakespeare to speak for us today (we must speak for ourselves), nor is it any good dragging him screaming into the modern world. If his work still has meaning for us it is simply as an irritation, or thorn in the flesh. I half take the sense of this, but only half; so let me plunge straight into the actual experience, three moments of it in particular.

The first is in *Macbeth*. A "Prologue" stumblingly reads out the plot of the play, as retailed by Simon Forman, whereupon a bird-like punk who bursts from the auditorium to be to the (national) stage, quavering "E! troppo facile cominciare così" (It's too easy, beginning that way!). Furious, she or he grabs the clothes off *Macbeth*'s and Banquo's backs, soaks them in a vast washing-tub, and slaps them back on their shoulders, and by flashes of lightning we see the men wrestling with their dripping garments. So much for "So foul and fair a day" — like most of Shakespeare's metaphors treated literally here (it is, after all, going only one step further than Wilson Knight). The actors then retire to an open living-house at the back of the stage, to rub themselves down, while the action proceeds in other enclaves of the stage, which is partitioned off like a film-studio. A theatrical logic is apparent in this. It is not *Macbeth* Tremble live rabbits, nor Peter Hall's nude Rhinemaidens, for the consequences are faithfully

## On show

Stephen Pickles

British Theatre Designers  
Lyttelton Circle Foyer, National Theatre

Toy theatres are no longer as popular as they should be. Peeping into the small set models exhibited in the Lyttelton circle foyer gives something of the same pleasure that children get from forts and farms, doll's houses and sweetshops. But these are serious toys designed to help with basic production ideas as they are established between the director and designer. In some exhibits the partial realization of these ideas offers clues to how the emotional and intellectual "feel" of a production will be achieved. In Patrick Robertson's model for English National Opera's production of *The Turn of the Screw*, for example, screens the height of an apex far arch upstage. Slides are projected — black-and-white images of gothic interiors, fantastic staircases, a conservatory. The final effect, shown in a photograph, is a compelling atmosphere — emotionally overcharged, a half-real world teetering on the brink of dissolution. Rosemary Venore's costumes are carefully muted greys and blues, keeping the characters in their shadowy world. Bob Crowley's designs for *King Lear* portray a chilly indifference and some evocative architectural facades. A few chairs, some marvellous acting, and the thing is done. Not quite: it is important to realize that, as expressive "impulses" are hard to achieve. The other side of the empty space is a comic outlier, as in Tim Goodchild's witty tumble of blue-and-white porcelain for *The Mikado*. A large abstract stage right, huge ginger jars, bamboo, all-white with red and blue flags, and Queen Victoria herself perched, ornamented the design alone, tells you the opera will be fun.

A naughtier kind of fun is to be seen in Ralph Koltai's design for Ken Russell's production of *Die Soldaten*. A huge pair of disembodied red lips, breasts, and gigantic thighs complete with solitary suspender do not keep us guessing about the tone of Zimmermann's opera. From the grey-white ruins of Maria Björnson's set for Janáček's *House of the Dead*, a different sort of truth emerges. She has managed to create a dusty destruction of buildings on which both real and action can take place on the same symbolic levels. The costume designs have clearly been researched but a design is as seen in Vienna 1946, say. It is also all ruins and our response is to both the general and the particular.

David Short was awarded the Gold Medal at the Prague Quadrennial for his costume designs for *Travelling Island* and *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. As drawings they are extremely accomplished, larger than is usual, with clever likenesses of the actors. The costumes themselves are not especially remarkable but the attention to detail is considerable. It is said that there are no actual costumes on show and it is a compelling atmosphere — emotionally overcharged, a half-real world teetering on the brink of dissolution. Rosemary Venore's costumes are carefully muted greys and blues, keeping the characters in their shadowy world. Bob Crowley's designs for *King Lear* portray a chilly indifference and some evocative architectural facades. A few chairs, some marvellous acting, and the thing is done. Not quite: it is important to realize that, as expressive "impulses" are hard to achieve. The other side of the empty space is a comic outlier, as in Tim Goodchild's witty tumble of blue-and-white porcelain for *The Mikado*. A large abstract stage right, huge ginger jars, bamboo, all-white with red and blue flags, and Queen Victoria herself perched, ornamented the design alone, tells you the opera will be fun.

## commentary



Costume design by Maria Björnson for Janáček's *From the House of the Dead*. From the exhibition reviewed below.

a little Chaplinesque ballet. In which the courtesiers and their new king, both on their best behaviour, nervously inspect their own appearance — sniff their own armpits, hitch their striped trousers, and repeatedly check their flies. The turn is led by the same fine actor, tall and a little resembling James Joyce, who was so resembling as King Henry. (I tried to find out his name but, faithful to the principles of a Collective, nobody could or would tell me it.) It is in this theatrical moment, though, that doubts arise. For, reject the banish the feeling that Shakespeare himself, and not just burlesque, is being "sent up" — funnily, as in the scenes described above; unfunnily when, at Claudius's touch on the shoulder, Hamlet (a stylized "man of '68" in jeans and knitted headwarmer) specs a large quantity of yoghurt; and fairly funnily when Hamlet later drowns Ophelia by ducking her head in an enamel kitchen washbowl. *Henry IV* worked far and away better than the rest. The company had separated out one strong element in the play, the anti-heroic one, and it served as a support to the rest through all the sometimes stumbling, sometimes dazzling, improvisations.

How can any style hope to carry such a vast superstructure of ideas as it is here asked to? We are told to find in these productions an expression or our own (reported) nihilism, "derision" and metaphysical despair. We are to respond to the dialectical structure of the three productions: to see Hamlet as a man who, though the times are out of joint, tries to understand them by means of the existing conceptual apparatus; to see *Macbeth* — antithetically — as a realization of pure "terrorist" action in all its negativity; and in *Henry IV* we are to find at least one character (Prince Hal) who manages to

## In depth

Harold Hobson

JOHN FIELMEIER  
Agnes of God  
Greenwich Theatre

The outstanding feature of John Fielmeier's *Agnes of God* is the performance of Susanah York as a psychiatrist devoid of religious faith who nevertheless cannot live without the true nature of his own play. Titles in the play, and best is the last show. It is to the others that the big dramatic revelations are given: to the Mother Superior (Honor Blackman) of the convent in which the action takes place, who reveals that she has been a married woman, and has children who hate her; but above all, to the young novice Agnes (Hilary Reynolds) who, in fits of hysteria, turns out to have had a child born of God whom she strangles with a piece of cord.

It is these unusual people and events (sensational enough to have satisfied Shakespeare or Ford) that Miss York's building a costume on the body during fittings, is represented here by his (admittedly stunning) honeycomb design for *Oedipus Rex* only.

Many things, of course, are unrevealed, although a series of talks by some of the designers may give away a few secrets. The photographs, reveal a model's accuracy and atmosphere but disasters are all too familiar to designers. The concept is one thing: the execution is another. Also the lighting designer is not mentioned, though in many of the shows represented here his contribution would have been important. There are hardly any ballet designs and the most shameful absence of all is the lack of any design from the Royal Opera House. The exhibition runs until September 17.

still. Miss York has never been lovelier, not acted with more troubled and troubling intensity than in this play.

It is the great merit of *Agnes of God* that it avoids the trap into which nearly all contemporary theatre falls, that is, the temptation to gain a facile interest and a factitious realism by dealing merely with contemporary social difficulties. But Fielmeier does his best to hide his own virtues, and to conceal the true nature of his own play. Titles are not everything, but few people can be expected to remember that one of the many things that *The Charterhouse of Parma* is not about is the charterhouse of Parma; and that Rob Roy is not the hero of Rob Roy. They are likely to suppose that, because it is called *Agnes of God*, the chief concern of the play will be whether Agnes did, or did not, commit murder, and that once the question is answered, all interest in the work vanishes. But if this were so, *Agnes of God* would be no more than just another mystery play, with Martho Livingstone in the role of a detective employing an unusual and on the whole somewhat unacceptable technique.

The problem that the play sets is whether Dr Livingstone will acknowledge, as the miracle she demands before she will believe, Agnes's divine conception of a child. She is given an opportunity of finding out whether her proclaimed optimism is a fact or a delusion, a grasp at salvation or an avoidance of reality. Frank Hauser has directed the play with great subtlety, and balanced hysteria and quietness so that their equilibrium never fails. He sees it that there are no questions which can be easily answered. Both Miss Blackman, and Miss Reynolds, offer Miss York's bewilderment admirably.

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and *The Rape of Lucrece*. "The tragedy of Hamlet prince of Denmark" is the running title throughout the earliest known text, the 1603 Quarto, which also names Shakespeare as its author. The play had already been registered in 1602 as "Hamlet" acted by the Lord Chamberlain's servants; that is, yet again Shakespeare's own company.

To all this the Arden editor inexplicably prefers Kyd's *Hamlet*, which sounds like the mare's nest it is. In Arden, this conjectural interpretation of Nashe's phrase "the Kludge in Aescop", some fifty words later than his comment on *Hamlet*, seems "highly probable"; outside, in the light of the facts, it looks wholly unconvincing. An even higher flight of Arden imagination is its claim that *Hamlet* Q1 1603 was "conclusively demonstrated" by Duthie in 1941 (a long time to wait) to be just a "reconstruction" of the very different and far more famous second Quarto of 1604, apparently with some help from the 1623 Folio text which is imagined, as usual, to have been already in existence and available for the purpose. But again Duthie's book is just as sowedly speculative as Alexander's, with its own cast of curiously composite characters such as a "private-actor", an "actor-reporter" and a "reporter-verifier". Groundlings will see these too as needless enticements, like the theory itself. The Arden editor sportingly points to one, if only one, of its gnawing flaws. If Q2 was really reconstructed into Q1, then the reconstructors fearfully reconstructed Polonius into Corambis and his servant Reynaldo into Montano. In Arden, "no satisfactory solution has ever been suggested". Outside, anybody can suggest one straight away, namely that this whole reconstruction theory is gratuitous nonsense. In the real world, an inferior text dated 1603 will not only precede, not follow, a better one dated 1604 or 1623; and of course it was the author who changed the names of his characters. Why?

Even Duthie cites the "not unreasonable conjecture" that Corambis was too recognizably a caricature of

Sir William Cecil. If so, perhaps there was a Latin pun on "coram-bis" and "caecilia" (from "caecus")? Then Montano would be an even more obvious allusion to Cecil's secretary Michael (Hickie), who is addressed as "Mythiel" in a 1592 letter from the Earl of Southampton's secretary. We can all too easily make a Montano out of a Mythiel. I add such comparatively petty points to concede that embroidery may be permissible if duly distinguished from what is material. Only its incorporation weakens the fabric of argument.

There are some 400 lines peculiar to *Hamlet* Q1. That gives a total 2,550 anonymous lines in four Quarto texts, each closely related to a Shakespeare play. A: those lines were produced by poetical pirates in the process of memorial reconstruction. B: they were written by a playwright in the process of writing a play. Take away imagination, and that leaves B. For A purposes, we have further to imagine four different acts of piracy, on four different bases, with four different results, at four different times between 1590 and 1603, by a dozen different procedures and agents, all equally unknown to any contemporary record. The B proposal points to one poet at one period, with documented testimony to his identity from Greene, who knew him and his work well. In world A, actors produce Bad Quartos from their bad memories and bad behaviour; in B, tolerable texts from professional memories and civilized behaviour. In both worlds, one of these actors was Shakespeare himself. In both worlds, each of those 2,550 lines—enough for a whole new play—must have been written by a writer and conveyed to a compositor. In both worlds, one writer keeps on showing the same hand.

A *Shrew* is notorious for its repetitiveness and its allusions to Marlowe. Alexander identified stylistic fingerprints in the lines peculiar to *Contention* and *True Tragedy*—repetitiveness, and allusions to Marlowe. Those lines also echo Greene. Dover Wilson identified stylistic fingerprints in *Titus*

*Andronicus*—repetitiveness, the influence of Marlowe and Greene, and the presence of "Peelo". But this repetitive writer who echoed Marlowe and Greene and Peelo was in fact the young Shakespeare—the same Shakespeare who at the same period was publicly pilloried as a plagiarist from Marlowe, and Greene, and Peelo. And this same Shakespeare strongly resembles the first-poet-apprenticed by Duthie in *Hamlet* Q1 behaving very suspiciously, for example by plundering (of all sources) the 1589 text. This suspect too has obligingly left his fingerprints, and Duthie has duly identified them. "One of his marked characteristics is a tendency to repeat phrases." Further, he is familiar (as Duthie also shows) with Shakespeare's style of punctuation with the unpublished text of *Twelfth Night*, and with other Folio plays, in minute detail. As anyone can check, he also exhibits the characteristics of the history and comedy Quartos as defined above. Who can he possibly have been? His identikit picture is worth a closer look. In three different scholarly hypotheses, advanced by three independent theorists whose views are all in violent disagreement, these strikingly similar features are being discerned and described. They belong to a poet or poets who (like Shakespeare, as it happens) drew vivid non-pictures of faces and their literal or figurative expressions; and these in turn may offer further clues to identification.

"Proud Protector, envy in thy eyes I see! The big-swollen venom of thy hateful heart! (Contention); "What fatal star malignant frowns from heaven?" (*True Tragedy*); "And golden summer sleeps upon thy cheeks" (*A Shrew*); "With a face like Vulcan/A look fit for a murder and a rape/A dull-dead hanging look and a hell-bred eye/To affright children and amaze the world" (*Hamlet* Q1). Who penned those stage commonplaces of the period? Poetic apprentices inadvertently indentured to various pirate bands every other leap year, in accordance with a widespread and protracted practice that no one ever heard of. Or, less imaginatively, William Shakespeare.

## Wrong side outward

Inga-Stina Ewbank

LISA JARDINE

*Still Harping on Daughters: Women and Drama in the Age of Shakespeare*  
202pp. Harvester Press. £18.95.  
0 7108 0436 9

John Marston's *The Fawn*, splendidly revived by the National Theatre (and reviewed in the *TLS*, July 29), is not one of the plays drawn on by Lisa Jardine in her study of female characters and their relation to beliefs about women in the period. But one or two scenes in that play helped me to understand why I felt fascinated by her book as cultural history and depressed by it as dramatic criticism.

At one point in *The Fawn*, the "bald fool" Dondolo lists the few remaining passengers in his ship of fools: among them "a few critics" and in particular one who has worn himself out in the study of the problem "why *mentula* [penis] should be the feminine gender, since the rule is *Propria quæ maribus tribuitur masculina dicitur*". In the new cholastricism of feminist studies such questions, with cultural as well as philological roots, have proved a good deal more significant than Marston might have imagined. Lisa Jardine is healthily sceptical of the strategies by which feminist criticism has so far appropriated Shakespeare; and she writes in anger—also, as style and proof-reading suggest, in some haste—at the apparent inability of such critics to brook with the conventions of orthodox Shakespeare criticism. The sins of the past apparently fall into two "schools": in one of which, somewhat implausibly, Anne Barton and Juliet Dusinberre stand together, for the "perfectly reflecting glass" approach (i.e. assuming Shakespeare's "real" personality, and what the play portrays, woman realistically) and another, represented by a number of recent American gender-critics, taking on the "distorted masculine view" (i.e. Shakespeare was willy-nilly a male chauvinist). As the slightly awkward title of her book would seem to suggest, Lisa Jardine introduces her own approach with a certain amount of irony, but this is dispelled by the claim of offering "a feminist criticism appropriate to the 16th century" and dis-appears altogether in the establishment of a new orthodoxy. She discovers identical "patriarchal" assumptions about women in the social history of the period and in its literature, particularly in the plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries. Much of the rest, gloss, education, legal and medical background and material is fascinating and, if not new (for her sources are often unashamedly second-hand), newly synthesized. It is the ultimate synthesis, of background and text, which depresses: when the new "rules" clashes as momentously with perceived dramatic effects as does Dondolo's critic's rule of grammar with his *mentula*.

This is not so say that it is not a scholarly book. Though one may not agree that the peripatetic allegorizing of the Queen was in the cause of obscuring her non-maleanness, Lisa Jardine produces convincing evidence that the Elizabethan age was not one of incipient female emancipation, and that it saw and used the woman question as an objective correlative for a general social unease and uncertainty. But, with all respect to her learned arguments, the author could have learnt a lesson from another scene in *The Fawn* where the disguised Duke draws out a self-proclaimed but bogus Don Juan by bawling forth, in a highly stereotyped fashion, on the sensuality of women; and where Nymphadora, one of the lightweight courtiers, missing the irony and wishing to show that she knows the rules of the game, tries to top it all: "By Janus, women are but men turned the wrong side outward." The same failure to evaluate what is said in terms of speaker, tone and overall context leads, in the book, to a series of readings of plays which all too often miss the mark. Like Nymphadora, the reader is sent "the wrong side outward". Of course the categorical assumption that the plays on the Elizabethan stage were "stage" plays, written out of stereotyped beliefs about women for identical attitudes in the audience, solves a great many critical problems.

Taking Candide's line "So our leader's led/And we are women's men" as the sum of the play, it is easy to conclude that in *Antony and Cleopatra*, "as in *Troilus and Cressida*, female sexuality has man unmanly in its thrall... Antony is ravished by Cleopatra (what gender *mentula* now?), therefore the heroic Antony must meet his end." *Macbeth*, if we remember the tradition and forget about the individual Islem, becomes a play on the failure of taming a shrew: Lady Macbeth's tremendous speeches are those of the "perennially threatening woman". And, though Macbeth is threatened enough to commit murder, "the male member of the audience" (no pun intended?) is suitably reassured that nothing is here for tears: "No woman of his will ever get out of hand, and hence the representation is equally a source of delight." *King Lear* offers no problem if we know the stereotype that female silence equals virtue; and on the same score, also remembering that the tongue is the woman's *mentula*, Desdemona's culpability resolves the issue of Othello's heroism: her back-chat with Iago establishes her as the traditional shrew, and "Iago's own insidious tongue has only to play on these traditional fears lurking beneath female 'mystery' to rouse Othello to full jealousy, and finally murder". After many such "only"s—including Hamlet's fear of being displaced in the line of succession by a child of Gertrude and Claudio (never mind the elective monarchy, or Gertrude's age), or Isabella's failure, according to the "patriarchy", to live up to standards of all those female saints who bumbly suffered sexual assault—one begins to long for some of the despised "orthodox Shakespeare criticism".

Perhaps one longs most of all for a sense that the audience was, as it is, able to distinguish between what a character says and what the play shows. "Only men," we are told, "surround the Duchess [of Malfi]; the audience can do little more than accept their version of her behaviour and motives." Apparently the dramatic key to *The Duchess of Malfi* lies in Ferdinand's version of the Duchess—she marries for lust—as that to *Othello* lies in Iago's vision of Desdemona. By this rule, the comedy heroines fare badly, too, the wittier the more shrewish. Kate and Beatrice equally "strike the primitive fear of disorder and misrule into the hearts of the men around them, although their wit is directed to the modern audience's chattering and alert". No user referring to their sex-appeal, for in the first chapter—and I find most difficult to swallow—Lisa Jardine argues that the erotic interest in the boy actors impersonating women is homosexual and that the female figures in Shakespeare's comedies, especially when dressed up as boys, appeal to the audience as "wanton female boys". Apart from being based on obviously selective evidence—the chief anti-dramatic authority is the rabidly anti-theatrical John Rainolds—this would seem to be several questions: what about the differences between public and private theatres? and, indeed, what about the logical connection with the rest of the book's argument? Does Rosalind in *As You Like It*, whose tongue (male or female) is so agile, raise primitive fears of misrule, damn herself as a shrew, or appeal to latent homosexuality?

Of course it is important that we should take a realistic and informed view of Elizabethan philosophies of woman, her sexual appetite, her procreative function, her legal position, and so on. But it is also important to let this view overshadow what our experiences in the theatre and in the study (even while reading "orthodox" criticism) tell us: that the great dramatists work by both using and questioning, according to their dramatic needs, traditions and stereotypes.

Paul J. Alpers's 1967 study *The Poetry of "The Faerie Queene"* has recently been reprinted (415pp. University of Missouri Press, Paperback £12.00/\$26.95). Among the topics considered are "The Rhetorical Mode of Spenser's Narrative", "Interpretation and the Sixteenth-Century Reader", "Spenser's Poetic Language", "Spenser's Use of Allegory", and "The Nature of

A. LAIGR (Editor)

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## Famously rich

E. S. Turner

LESLIE FIELD

Bendor: The Golden Duke of Westminster  
292pp Weidenfeld and Nicolson.  
£12.95.  
0 297 78046 8

"As an adult, he was half grown-up but twice life-size," says Leslie Field of her hero Bendor, second Duke of Westminster, a fitting description of a man who once summoned his steam yacht *Cuty Sark* from Norway to the Riviera in order to carry a party of guests from Cannes to Monte Carlo for a tennis match, then sent the vessel back to northern waters.

High Grosvenor, nicknamed Bendor after his grandfather's racehorse, never got into the *Dictionary of National Biography*. In 1966 he was the subject of a full-length life, *Lord of London*, by Michael Harrison. Bendor's grandfather, the first Duke, did qualify for the *DNB*, though nothing could conceal the fact that he was duked for being enormously rich and nothing else. "No member of the family has held high public office or performed great service to the state," says Bendor's new biographer; worse, the family line is not stately home open to the public. The Grosvenors were too rich to have to be wise or witty, though Bendor is here credited with saying of the monstrous Gothic pile of Eaton Hall: "It would be as great a crime to pull it down as it was to put it up." (That crime has now been committed.)

Like Henry VIII Bendor was driven to excesses because his wives could not produce an heir (a son, Edward, died young). Unlike Henry he treated his discarded wives with marked generosity, which at least helped to compensate them for the years of seclusion in his yachts. In five years the third duchess never spent more than three weeks in the same place. No man ever rushed round more quixotically and

more expensively, to less purpose.

A former editor of the *Tatler*, Ms Field enjoys herself describing the trappings of Bendor's power. She has an eye for jewellery, clothing, food and flowers. She revels in the details of an establishment which had a psittor-bro (to feed the parrot) and a monkey-man (to look after the monkeys on their lake isle). She notes Bendor's partiality for hiring special trains, his habit of ignoring the Post Office and sending his love letters by the safe hands of his servants, even across the Channel (less mortals could send their love letters by the now-vanished District Messenger service, but it wasn't quite the same thing).

At times the narrative teeters perilously between that of the *Crutland* school of "Tiredness and shyness" and the thought of the tale she would tell at the breakfast table: "I've actually danced with the famous Duke of Westminster" and Jennifer's Diary ("the new Duchess, who was wearing a navy blue crepe suit with a red and white polka dot georgette blouse, and blue hat pulled down low, half concealing her face"). But there are many excellent anecdotes, one of which tells how the jealous "Coco" Chanel leans over the rail of the Flying Dutchman and, in the Duke's presence, without a word drops his plump propitiatory emerald into the sea. Well done, Coco!

Wist, one keeps wondering, is Winston Churchill doing in this *galère*? He is a constant guest. He is Bendor's best man at his third wedding. At Eaton Hall he is very angry when one of Bendor's conjurers whips away his braces, but he is soon back enjoying the ducal hospitality. When World War Two begins, he warns Bendor that his anti-Jewish and pro-sempitern attitude will steep him in "measureless odium" if he persists in it, and the Duke takes the hint. Otherwise he too might have ended up without his braces, in custody.

Bendor had won the DSO in 1916, leading his armoured cars across the Western Desert to rescue a number of

prisoners-of-war held by the Senussi. It was a very dashing exploit, though one is pulled up with a jerk by the sentence: "Meanwhile Bendor decided he could not risk any treachery from the Senussi guards, so they were all executed." Was that really the way of it? Was the richest man in Britain an executioner? If the guards had been Germans, what would he have done?

Bendor might have been remembered merely as the last of the really spoiled aristocrats had it not been for the part he played in the "Beauchamp affair." Earl Beauchamp, his brother-in-law, Leader of the Liberals in the Lords and Warden of the Cinque Ports, was allowed to flee the country in 1931 after evidence, gathered by Bendor, suggested that he had indulged in homosexual recreations. "He was the last authentic case of someone being

hounded out of society," we are told, but surely there are more recent examples. The disgraced Beauchamp could not have been given the ultimatum "Go out and govern New South Wales" because he had already done so, not very efficiently. It all happened because Bendor had old-fashioned ideas in sexual matters. For "shopping" his brother-in-law he has become a fiend in the eyes of those with new-fashioned ideas.

It is a pity that so many of Ms Field's sentences are slapdash ("In addition to being the mother of his heir, the Duke was exceedingly fond of his daughter-in-law..."). She also uses the word "convince" in the new-fashioned way - "he convinced her to open a London boutique". But it is a lively account and will entertain a great many, besides bringing exceptional joy to the reviewers of *Tribune*.

## On the idyllic side

Keith Jeffery

KIRSTY McLEOD

The Last Summer  
191pp Collins. £10.95.  
0 00 216456 6

How can we possibly discover exactly what the summer of 1914 was like? So enduring are the myths and so apparently comprehensive were the destructive effects of the Great War that it now seems impossible to disentangle fact from nostalgic fancy. In this book Kirsty McLeod gives us a mixture of both, although the emphasis is more on the latter. While she has used some contemporary historical evidence, the bulk of the volume is based on memoirs of various sorts and a series of evidently fascinating personal reminiscences collected by the author herself. We learn, therefore, not so much "what happened" or "what it was like" in 1914, as what people have remembered of that "lost golden summer".

There are two polarized myths regarding 1914. The more familiar and more generally accepted is that which describes an idyllic, halcyon summer, a "lost Eden", the high summit of Edwardian peace, stability and contentment, all of which was brutally swept away in the war. The other interpretation, much beloved of iconoclastic historians (the jargon adjective is "revisionist"), holds that war or no war, all of Europe was on the edge of precipice. Social unrest was mounting, syndicalist revolutionaries spoke of imminent industrial insurrection, the complacent capitalist classes clung on to power only by employing more and more repression. British politics in particular were deeply divided - as never before or since - by the Irish question, which threatened to break out into widespread violent civil disorder. In these circumstances war actually came as a relief, dissipating social tensions and redirecting domestic antagonisms towards foreign enemies.

Miss McLeod notes both of these interpretations, but she concentrates more on the "lost, long hot summer before the storm" side of things. Out of seven chapters in the book, she devotes one each to the four months of May to August. Here we find Vera Brittain, Nancy Cunard, Rupert Brooke, Julian Grenfell, all enjoying Ascot, Wimbledon, Henley and the rest of the Season. McLeod adds to the familiar accounts of this period (such as that of Lady Diana Cooper) extensive quotations from her own interviews, which refreshingly included one or two people from outside the upper and middle classes. The book could have done with more such memories since the image we have of any historical period unfortunately depends to a disproportionate extent on the writings of those people who believed themselves important enough to record their own memories. Few maid-servants, alas, fall into this category.

One of the virtues of the book is that the author does not stop dead (perhaps

an unhappy turn of phrase) on August 4, 1914, but also narrates the initial enthusiasm which greeted the war and the subsequent widespread disillusionment. One of her interviewees, Uric Nisbet, in 1914 a seventeen-year old schoolboy who was commissioned in the first fortnight of the war, graphically describes how enthusiasm was stifled with a sense of duty. There was never any question but that one should fight "for King and Country and Empire". "On the Somme," he adds, "they just died and that was that".

*The Last Summer* does not examine in any depth the "teetering on the verge of disaster" interpretation, which, with the benefit of hindsight, afterwards gained some currency among the upper classes. It does, however, have some sharp criticism of the absurd adulation directed towards the legendary lost generation of gilded youth by those who survived the war. "It is an inescapable fact," remarks the author, "that most of those who fought and returned... But those who did not return left behind them a memorial of peculiar emotional power: poetry. On every O-level syllabus in the country the 'lost generation' is commemorated by all those sensitive young poets whose occupational morbidity was swollen by experience on the Western Front. This was something which Rupert Brooke, who epitomized the *jeunesse dorée*, never shared. It was a cruel irony that the author of '1914' should have died from blood poisoning contracted from an insect bite while on his way to fight at Gallipoli.

## On parade

John Grigg

DAVID DUFF

George and Elizabeth: A Royal Marriage  
240pp Collins. £9.95.  
0 00 216375 6

A competent and experienced royal biographer, David Duff has hitherto largely confined himself to royal personages who are dead. In his new book, however, he attempts to write about two people one of whom is still happily, very much alive. Partly for this reason, no doubt, his study of George VI and Queen Elizabeth (now the Queen Mother) is a rather slackly dish, with altogether too much sugar and not enough spice.

The two principals' many virtues are paraded, but there is hardly a hint of any faults. For example, the author mentions George VI's invitation to the Neville Chamberlain to appear on the balcony of Buckingham Palace on his return from signing the Munich agreement in 1938, without remarking that this was, perhaps, the most unbecomingly modern times, since the agreement was bitterly controversial. The book is readable, but contributes little to knowledge or understanding.

## By heart

Ruth Harris

ALICE FAIRFAX-LUCY (Editor)

Mistress of Charleotte: The Memoirs of Mary Elizabeth Lucy  
184pp. Collins. £9.95.  
0 575 03286 3

Mary Elizabeth Lucy was eighty when she fancied that it would smuse her to write her reminiscences and that it might smuse her grandchildren to read them. She proceeded to fill five notebooks with her story and half a century after her death these came to light in the drawer of her davenport. They were found by Alice Fairfax-Lucy, the daughter-in-law of one of those same grandchildren and another mistress of Charleotte, the Warwickshire house to which Mary Elizabeth was brought as a bride in 1823 and which was to be one of the main interests and pleasures of her life. When she arrived the Great Hall "did indeed look as it might have done in Shakespeare's time" but with the help of Thomas Willement, Stained-Glass Artist to George IV, she and her husband soon changed all that. Now Charleotte with its flock wall-papers, Tudor-style plaster ceilings and heraldic glass is a superb example of Early Victorian Gothic.

The last words in her memoirs are a prayer for "more heart" and heart, in the sense of both courage and affection, coloured her life. She fell from a swing and nearly lost all her teeth, she fell from horses, she was rescued from quicksands, she broke her arm, she was always fainting; she lost five of her eight children and was widowed young but yet there was always time for a twirl at the swing of goyley. On the wrong side of seventy, at five o'clock in the morning, she danced Sir Roger de Coverley with as much spirit as she had in her teens. No wonder that Lord Leigh insisted that she should open the ball with him.

But there were dark leaves in the garland. She was not allowed to marry the young man with whom she had "exchanged hearts" and although she protested that she did not, could not love him, she was made to accept George Lucy, who to her seemed dull and middle-aged. Her mother told her that love would come "and it did come today on the sunny morning of youth". George Lucy was a kind and indulgent husband but there was a room at Charleotte called the fatal or death room, because Mary Elizabeth lived to mourn every child that had been born in it. Left a widow at forty-two she continued to run Charleotte until her son, Spencer, married; she did not realize her new position until on the eve of the wedding she found her bedroom prepared for the new Mrs Lucy. Spencer even suggested that she should give up her own maid to her daughter-in-law, but Gates was right-thinking and preferred to stay with her mistress. It cannot have been easy for any of them but "the bright hope of his future happiness, dispelled the clouds of my own gloomy thoughts and made me forget self and how changed was my lot which had been cast on so fair a ground for so many years."

She lived through the whole Victorian era. As a child she had been taught by Mrs. Thral's Signor Fiozzi, as a married woman she had met Countess Guiccioli in Rome and found her like but not half as beautiful as a Titian Magdalen, and as a widow she attended Daisy Warwick's wedding. Throughout it all she was supported by the conviction, which was of the age in which she lived, that a marvellous providence had ordained it all for the best.

It is easy to see why Alice Fairfax-Lucy when working on *Charleotte and the Lucies* found Mary Elizabeth such good company. She has even forgiven what Mary Elizabeth and George did to the house and understands their comfortable certainty that anything the Elizabeths did, they could do better. Her model introduction and postscript frame the memoirs beautifully and her unobtrusive editing sets them in the context of the continuity of place and the passing of time. She shares her predecessor's qualities of heart and wit, as well as her gift for the vivid turn of phrase. We are lucky that they should have found each other.

## THEATRE

JOHN FULLER (Editor)

John Gay: Dramatic Works  
Two volumes

463 and 398pp. Oxford University Press. £45 per volume.  
0 19 812701 4 (Vol 1)  
0 19 812320 5 (Vol 2)

Dramatic works are both less and more than plays, as poetic works aspire beyond but don't reach poems. The term provides a neater title than *Poetry and Prose*, two earlier volumes edited by Vinton A. Dearing (1974) which made up Gay's previous contribution to the Oxford English Texts. One needs this label because of the nature of the contents: a pastoral tragedy, the libretto for *Acts and Galatea* (variously styled a serenata, a pastoral entertainment, and an English pastoral opera), several brands of farce loaded with Polonian epithets, and of course the ballad operas proper. Among this plethora of mixed genres one might be tempted to forget that Gay wrote an orthodox social comedy, *The Distress'd Wife*, and a kind of topical closet-drama, *The Captives*. His *Rehearsal at Goodman* makes a faint at, but never quite becomes, a rehearsal comedy. One of the farces is entitled *The What D'Ye Call It*: as the editor remarks, this "is in the tradition of Shakespeare's *As You Like It* and Twelfth Night, or *What You Will*", but it is also in the tradition of playful obfuscation and obscure quibbling which the Scribnerians favoured.

Ever since the seminal essay by William Empson in *Some Versions of Pastoral*, critics have been much occupied by the genre slides in Gay: town eclogue and Newgate pastoral, mock-heroic and neo-georgic. Certainly his plays rely a good deal on parody and allusion. *The Wife of Bath* hovers some way off Chaucer, though the poet himself appears as a character in the earlier incarnations of this piece (1713); in the later (1730), he has been reduced to the lay role of Sir Harry Gauntlett. Then again, *The Rehearsal at Goodman* is an anglicized episode from *Don Quixote*; the story of the puppet-show from Part II, otherwise familiar today from Pina's opera *El Relevo de Maese Pedro*. *Achilles* is in a double sense travesty, since it shows the hero in petticoats and it puts Homeric figures through burlesque paces. One might even say that *Three Hours after Marriage* is Scribnerian pamphlet farce, cast in dramatic form, and as for the form (oxymoronic as "rock-opera" somehow fails to be) inscribes its mixed motives.

There has been no collection along these lines since 1795, when Edward Jeffery published two volumes of plays to make up a six-volume set of the works of Gay. In recent times there has been nothing beyond the sample (A decent one, it's true) included in G. C. Faber's edition of the *Poetical Works* (1926). This gave a plain text of all three ballad operas, plus *The Mockers*, *The What D'Ye Call It*, *Dione and Acts and Galatea*. There were brief fragments from the other plays, seemingly chosen for their metrical status. The only items which have previously been edited in full are *The Beggars' Opera*, on repeated occasions, and *Three Hours after Marriage* (twice, both to 1951). John Fuller thus had much ground-clearing to perform: text, stage-history, commentary and glossary. He has done these jobs very well, within narrow limits, and serious investigation of all major issues called up by Gay as a dramatist will now start from these two volumes.

Some may have found it quaint that such obscure items as *The Mockers* should have attracted the attention of a poet. Is it a case of another Manilius, safely dull enough not to deplete Housman's creative energy? I do not think so, for Fuller resists the temptation to show himself more pedantic than the pedants, and whilst he has preserved a kind of semi-professional status as a scholar, he makes no perfunctory effort to keep literary sensibility out of his introduction. The author of *Epistles to Several Persons* would be unlikely to mistake the public task of an editor for a confessional opportunity, and it is only in gloating critical comments that one gets a strong

## From Newgate to neo-georgic

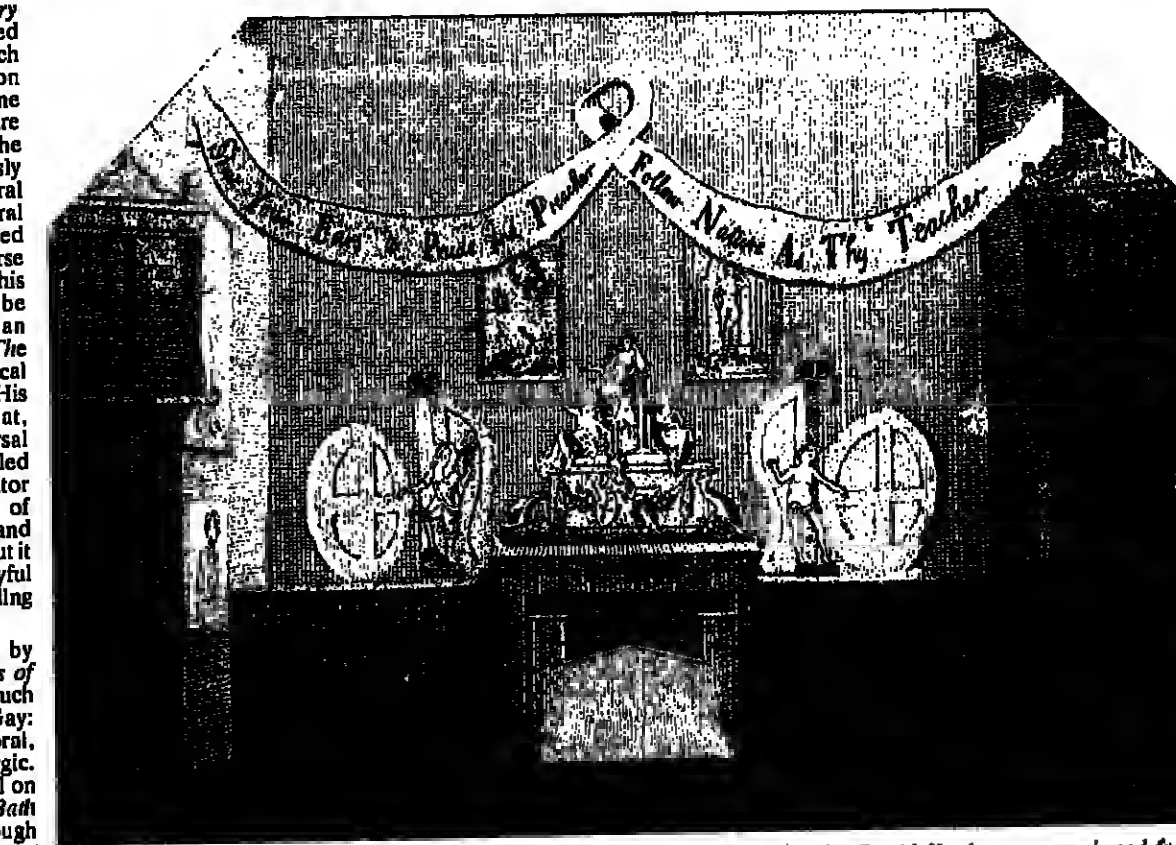
Pat Rogers

sease of Fuller's preferences. Of *The Wife of Bath* he writes, "Only gusto and rhetoric could successfully begin to disguise its lack of one of Gay's redeeming skills, imaginative metamorphosis and farce" (though does "redeeming" refer back to the defects in this play, or is it a limiting judgment of wider application?) He risks only one or two adventurous opinions: "Just as Pope bal-

lances of commerce ("To what does the Crown itself owe its Splendor and Dignity") is taken straight from that recent hit, in a very unScribnerian vein. *The London Merchant*. Most of the ingredients here are familiar, but they are animated by Gay's ear for colloquial dialogue. Fuller says of *The Rehearsal at Goodman* that the chatter sounds "like a small-town version of *Palate Conversation*, though without

Men were born to lye, and Women to believe them!"

For the most part the editing is discreet and thorough: we can now not only play the game of ombre in *The Rape of the Lock*, but also join in a hand of quadrille at Goodman. The only possible ground of criticism is that Fuller expects quite a lot from his readers. Granted that this is a scholarly edition, not a student text, one might



"Mother Goose's Betrothal", ink on cardboard model for A. Rake's Progress by David Hockney, reproduced from Hockney Paints the Stage, to be published by Thames and Hudson on October 31 (224pp. £20. 0500 233772).

consciously betrays his literary distaste from Homer or Milton in investigating the social milieu and behaviour of Belinda and the Barrow, so Gay really rejects the modes of Seneca or Dryden in portraying the sufferings of Kitty and Filbert: but they both do this by parody. *The What D'Ye Call It* is a teasing play of the introduction, Fuller discriminates between the lack-lustre work and Gay "at his best", which seems to mean the farces, the *Beggar and Polly*. "The early plays contain within their parody or burlesque serious social and cultural indictments." It is "the overriding comic vision" irradiated by such parody and burlesque which counts for most.

Up to a point, I think this is just. One cannot claim very much for *The Mockers*, although Fuller's suggestion that the watchmen are no more than imitations of Dogberry "inevitably scaled down to the comfortable pantomime of Norris and Penkethman" seems a little condescending towards noteworthy performers we have not witnessed in the flesh. On the other hand, Fuller's description of *The Wife of Bath*, "Chaucer in ruffs", is exactly right. *Acts and Galatea* scarcely exists as an entity upon the printed page: one title-role: Lavinia Penton had retired for perhaps equally demanding life as mistress and ultimately consort to the Duke of Bolton - an event with enough of an offbeat to warrant a mention in the second book of *The Return of the Native*. Polly in breeches conformed to a hastily popular fashion: what does not seem to have been noticed is that her fainting from fatigue and then her being rescued by the pirates must recall the disguised Imogen in the cave of Belarius. Nothing can quite live up to the original, however: the tunes were never again so well chosen, and the striking paradoxes of Peachum, Lockie and Macheath decline in the later plays into cynical sententiousness: "For I never in my life was treacherous but to women; and you know men of the nicest punctilio make nothing of that" (*Polly*); or "It is no wonder that your fine folk live so great, when they pay for nothing" (*The Distress'd Wife*). Lucy in the original makes verbal wit into a metaphysical equation: "Sure

still think that archaic forms or meanings such as the following would be worth a brief gloss: *anatomy* (precise, corpse for dissection), *acretion* (puritan), *resty*, *ding*, *grand climacteric*, *even kidding* from "O ruddier than the Cherry". This slightly lofty concept of editorial intervention means that notes can be more scholarly than helpful: the sentence "In a white Sheet poor I must stand at Church yields a cross-reference to a Scribnerian squib, but not an explanation of the squib, but not an explanation of the penitential custom. Fashionable jargon words such as *cadious* are not so signalized: a convention, perhaps, in such editions, but perhaps a bad one. Sometimes proverbs are identified, but to *The What D'Ye Call It*, where the language is heavily inflected with folk rhythms, at least twenty are not. To be fair, Fuller is once more following respectable practice.

The least satisfactory part of the

commentary is that relating to *Three Hours after Marriage*, and specifically the part of Dr Fossile. The editor quotes a contemporary key which identifies Fossile as Dr. John Woodward on the basis of an anecdote about Kensington gravel-pits. But this is wholly spurious, as Woodward never published on the topic in his *Essay towards a Natural History of the Earth* (1695), and had collectors all over the world sending him fossil specimens. His visibility as geologist, as well as antiquarian and physician, was truly remarkable: and contemporaries would have picked up many local allusions throughout the course of the play. When in the first act he mentions the pineal gland, Fuller learnedly cites Descartes and others; but the original audience possibly recalled first the burlesque in Prior's *Alma* and then Woodward's own contributions to the subject.

There is a wider point here. Fuller seems not to have seen in time Joseph M. Levine's book *Dr. Woodward's*

*Shield* (1977), subtitled "History, Science, and Satire in Augustan England". This would have aided his annotation, but more importantly it would have reinforced the centrality of *Three Hours* in contemporary thinking. Ultimately the moral panic of the era went back not to Jacobites, or to innate ideas, or to the rape of Chastity, but - as in all ages, aye - to matters cosmic, eschatological, theological. After Locke and Newton, the great formers of the Augustan mind were people such as Thomas Burnet, Edward Lwyd, William Whiston, William Stokely and Woodward: creative ideologues and world-makers who happened to get things wrong. In what is probably the most significant work of the last decade for the study of the mentality of the age, Levine shows how Woodward raised the study of fossils to true philosophical dignity. "The disciples of the doctor and natural philosopher were exactly analogous to those of the antiquary... natural history was thought akin to civil history; and... fossil shells were studied like ancient coins." For the virtuoso, which is Woodward's role in the play, these "were all some part of a single, eventually, the entire history of the world would be re-created". We need to bear this in mind when reading *Gulliver*, *The Dunciad*, *Martha Scriverius*, for Swift, Pope and Arbuthnot charted these edifying currents of historico-scientific thought. The allusions are lighter and more purely facetious in *Three Hours*, but they lie at the heart of the central characterization. One product of this valuable edition of the plays may be to send people back to the play, and thus John Fuller has supplied the basis for a further raid on the partial inarticulacy of the ages before our own.

## Thumbs down

Marcy Kahan

JOHN D. MITCHELL

Theatre: The Search for Style  
332pp. Northwood Institute Press.  
£25.  
0 87359 028 7

Aside from their professional reputations as "master-directors", what do Hu Hsing Yen (Peking Opera), Gerald Freedman (Broadway), Onoe Baiko VII (Grand Kabuki, Tokyo), Dimitrios Rondiris (Greek National Theatre), Paul-Emile Deiber (Comédie Française), and Erwin Axar (Téâtre Wopzessny, Warsaw) have in common? Each has directed a masterpiece from New York's country's repertoire at New York's Theatre Arts, and in *Theatre: The Search for Style*, each is interviewed, along with nineteen other international colleagues, by the Institute's president, John D. Mitchell.

Mitchell seeks "explicit definitions of eighteen major styles of theatre".

The result is an eccentric bodgepodge of theatrical enthusiasms, convictions, and prejudices. In addition to conventional prescriptions for the correct handling of Racine's verse, Restoration fans, and Sanskrit costumes, the reader is also enlightened as to the most effective way of singing "I'm just a girl who can't say no", and warned that, in Kabuki theatre, a female character's thumbs should never show.

Mitchell's persistent end earnest request for a definition of "style", however, is consistently and perhaps significantly thwarted. Of the twenty-five directors interviewed, most take refuge in meaningless generalization ("You, above all, must allow the composer to speak for himself") or Marivaux play, it is important to achieve the style of Marivaux" or solipsism ("Style comes from one's sense of knowing what one's doing").

Ultimately, the richness and strangeness of the theatrical traditions touched upon by Mitchell's pedantic preoccupations, and make this volume of interviews worth dipping into.



## Citizens' theatre

John Hope Mason

MARIE-HÉLÈNE HUET

Rehearsing the Revolution:  
The Staging of Marat's Death 1793-1797

Translated by Robert Hurley  
116pp. University of California  
Press, £14.50,  
0 520 04321 9

He is sitting in his bath, his head thrown back; from the deep fatal wound in his chest there is a small trickle of blood. The white turban round his head and the linen draped round the bath look like strips of a winding-sheet. The pose, the wound and the winding-sheet remind us irresistibly of a hundred pictures of the dead Christ. But these elements of the picture are not the whole story. Balancing the head and torso, to the right, is a wooden packing-case. On it lie pen, ink and paper; written on the front are the words "A Marat. David" and beneath them "L'An Deux". Beside it hangs a lifeless arm, a pen still in the hand. The pans, the slogan and the data are the signs of a new order.

When we consider the number of dramatic events that occurred between the fall of the Bastille and Bonaparte's coup d'état it seems astonishing that this picture, David's "Marat assassiné", should be the most memorable image of those years. It is perhaps not surprising that the great mass events were not captured in a striking visual image, but what of the executions of Louis XVI, or the Girondin leaders, or Danton or Robespierre? Surely they were far more significant. The death of the king, in particular, was an event about which everyone had strong feelings. Yet no record of his execution comes immediately to mind. Instead it is a sick, exhausted journalist-cum-politician who gave rise to this secular *pietà*. Marat had shown courage, it is true, and insight as well. The paranoid streak in his character gave him, like many subsequent revolutionaries, an uneasy sense of the untrustworthiness of other revolutionaries and an unshakeable conviction (confirmed by events) that the only people who would take care of the people's interest were the people themselves. But he had not been a committed republican till late in the day, and his assertions of the need for dictatorship were not well received by those who were passionate democrats.

Yet there was an appropriateness about David's choice. Marat was first and foremost a writer and it was writers who were the prophets and priests of the new order. From the middle years of the century there had been a growing emphasis on the public role of the writer, the intellectual as man of action, the artist as teacher. It was in this way that Voltaire and Rousseau were taken as harbingers of the Revolution and it was in this belief that David himself was working. When the Revolution came, writers were prominently involved, directly and indirectly. An abundance of newspapers appeared, hundreds of new plays were written.

Among them was a handful of plays depicting Marat's death. These plays form one of the topics of this study. Marie-Hélène Huét's purpose is to make a "systematic critique" which will bring out "the dynamic aspects of spectacle and representation" during the Revolution. What she means by "systematic" is that she starts from a system, a combinatorial series of relations (*une combinaison*) that underlies a variety of functions. She takes the trial and execution of the king, and the death of a play about Marat, as parallel events that can reveal similarities between the tribunal and the stage, the executioner and the actor, and so on. Her underlying purpose is to show that "the Revolution operated perhaps primarily in the order of the language".

For a system to be of value in the study of history it has to engage with historical facts. Professor Huét allows a notable reluctance to do this. Discussing the adoption of the guillotine as the instrument of execution she cites some speeches in the Assembly in 1791. These show, she says, that "revolutionary justice was inscribed in a system of communication rather than a system of values" (my italics). In fact they show nothing of the kind. What they reveal is a passionate concern that certain values will be effectively promoted or engendered. If you care about the values then you care about how they are best communicated, but to suppose that that concern makes the communication pre-eminent is nonsense. It is also hard to credit her comments that for the spectator there was "no real difference" between a live execution and a theatrical performance of an execution.

On the theatre Huét is both ill-informed and wrong. What characterized the revolutionary

theatre, according to her, was "the oppressive primacy of the text and the increased distance between stage and spectators". In support of the second point she refers to the clearing of spectators from the stage; this had happened thirty years before the Revolution, in 1759, though this inconvenient date is omitted. This move, she says, "was a development Voltaire welcomed and Diderot deplored". Wrong: Diderot had campaigned for it. Like Voltaire he had an elevated sense of the theatre's function and wanted plays to be treated with respect. The spectators who sat on the stage were not, as Huét seems to think, the general audience but merely a handful of privileged members of society. The inability to attend to such distinctions is characteristic of this book.

The separation of spectator and actor is treated with steadily mounting exaggeration. We move from "the passive role" (p. 18) of "an increasingly constrained audience" (pp. 19, 35, 37) to "the mutilated role of spectator" (p. 38) who makes an "unconditional submission" (p. 43), and then to an audience subject to "elaborate surveillance" and "a profound and secret violence" (p. 44). You would not gather from this ridiculously over-charged rhetoric that theatres were immensely popular during these years. Following the abolition of the

monopoly of the Comédie Française in 1791 forty-five theatres sprang up in Paris, a huge increase in the audience. Nor would you have guessed that this audience, far from being passive, was noted for the way it interrupted performances.

However, Huét does touch on an interesting point here and if she had not excluded so much important material from consideration she could have made something of it. The passive role of the spectator in the theatre had been sharply criticized by Rousseau. His *Lettre à d'Alembert* had condemned French theatre for this and other reasons and had suggested instead a kind of civic celebration, an open-air *fête* in which a whole community could participate. This suggestion, much quoted after 1789, coincided with other aspirations of the time – the desire to emulate some of the practices of antiquity, the desire to replace royal or ecclesiastical ceremony with a civic equivalent – and contributed to the *fêtes* that were staged throughout these years. The first anniversary of the storming of the Bastille, the Fête de la Fédération, became the model for a series of public, mass events. Anniversaries, funerals, the installation of some great man in the Pantheon, all became occasions for the *fêtes*. Marat's funeral, organized by David and staged

with great expense by the Jacobin government, was one such occasion.

Huét mentions the *fêtes* briefly but chooses not to consider how they relate to her discussion. Yet these events were more representative of the revolutionary spirit than theatre plays; they were intended to break down, precisely the separation she speaks of and so effect an emotional transformation, turning the individual into a citizen. The extent to which they succeeded in doing this is very difficult to assess. Recent studies have argued that the very elaboration and detail of the *fêtes* entailed their inevitable failure, that the ambition behind them defied realization in any substantial way.

Whether or not that was so, they are central to any treatment of spectacle and representation at this time and should have been considered here. Vast and grandiloquent statements about the Revolution carry little weight when so much relevant material is left out of account. In the last resort, however, it is not so much the inadequacy of its methodology, or its thoroughly derivative character, that deprives this book of value; it is the irresponsibility that pervades it – an irresponsibility to facts and an irresponsible use of language. Short essays can give broad perspectives, but not when conducted like this.

## Unmasking a maschera

Masolino d'Amico

MICHAEL BYROM

Punch in the Italian Puppet Theatre  
229pp. Fontwell: Centaur Press, £15.  
0 90000 120 8

The title of this entertaining and informative study is a little misleading because the English Punch is not the same as the Italian Pulcinella, though a derivative of him. Michael Byrom tells us that he came to Britain from Italy in 1662, and delighted Samuel Pepys and the court of Charles II. For a long time thereafter "Punch" spoke an Italianate lingo (samples are given by Henry Mayhew in *London Labour*, and the *London Poor*, 1861) and maintained an Italian flavour, like ice-cream or pizza. But in time he became as English as Yorkshire pudding and lukewarm beer, and Mr Byrom represents the inability of a contemporary Italian scholar to enjoy him. "The English Pulcinella was a sort of Jack the Ripper: a blood-thirsty and murderous criminal. . . [Pulcinella] in London became an unfeeling thug. . . the good devil from Acerra would never have the barefacedness to knock down Zeza [the Italian equivalent of Judy], not even as a jest; and even less to throw the baby out of the window. If he had done so in Naples, the people would have destroyed the booth!"

Anton Giulio Bragaglia's shock at the English puppet's violence seems, rightly, preposterous to Byrom, who points out Pulcinella's fondness for the truncheon. Working as he is compelled to do from written sources (or what survives of them) and from the bare outlines of characters (five performances surviving only in descriptions), a theatre historian like Byrom may conclude that Punch and Pulcinella look alike, just as they resemble their Roman and pre-Roman ancestors Maccus, Buccus and Pappus, with their long, hook noses, and their distorted voices. Indeed, at times Byrom sees no real difference between Pulcinella and any other leading *maschera*.

Arlecchino in Venice, Gianduja in Turin, Stenterello in Florence, Gioppino in Bergamo, and Sandrone in Modena. . . and if we look beyond the Alps, we find him in even more guises: in England, Punch; in France, Polichinelle; in Spain, Don Cristóbal; in Germany, Hanswurst; in Russia, Petruschka; in Turkey, Karaguzuz; etc. His personality may take national and local forms but fundamentally it is always the same; namely, a mixture of the buffoon and the jester, which is the

Italian Comedy are clearly exemplified in the two zanni.

But Arlecchino's Lombard sense of humour, beautifully conveyed through his dialect and his gestures, is quite different from, say, Stenterello's Tuscan *gnagnara* or Gianduja's Piedmontese self-assurance. And Pulcinella's Southern, plebeian features – his indolence, his sing-song voice, his traditional hunger – are unique.

Byrom realizes this, but tends to ignore it in his search for similarities. Since he is concerned with "Punch" in his career in England, and the English Punch is a glove-puppet, he pays particular attention to glove-puppets, whose nuances are less conspicuous. In Italy Pulcinella the glove-puppet is a good deal less articulate than Pulcinella the string-puppet, let alone the live Pulcinella on a "real" stage. There, glove-puppets were the lowest form of theatre. One man in a *baracolo*, or *fioppo*, could often do everything himself, with the help of a child to take the collection; he could manage two or even three puppets at a time, as well as the "swazle" device (known variously as *pivetta*, *strego*, *franceschino*, *turri*) which gave them different voices and helped him to characterize his protagonist. The puppets themselves were often works of art, as the fine exhibition held of them in Milan in 1980 witnessed. The plays were short and elementary, sometimes abridgements of more sophisticated ones, and very largely based on improvisation. The dialogue was brief,

although there is evidence of occasional displays of verbal virtuosity, especially in the stock-character, the Doctor's tirade or long-winded strings of *non sequiturs*. Despite the exploits of famous and even legendary masters like the Roman Ghetanaccio, a satirist who was often in trouble with the authorities, very few written texts survive. Byrom prints four in his own diligent translations, yet the most substantial of these, "The Thirty-Three Misfortunes of Pulcinella", is not an original, but his reconstruction based on a longer *copione* for *marionette*, or string-puppets. On the other hand, hundreds of plays for *marionette* survive, and Byrom lists them in the collection of the National Library of Rome; he also quotes fascinating accounts of marionette theatre in Italy, by such articulate travellers as Dickens, Stendhal and Flaubert.

Byrom's subject-matter is immense, and he has wisely cut it down to size, contenting himself with following, in a series of sketches, the vicissitudes of his other hand, hundreds of plays for *marionette* survive, and Byrom lists them in the collection of the National Library of Rome; he also quotes fascinating accounts of marionette theatre in Italy, by such articulate travellers as Dickens, Stendhal and Flaubert.

JEAN BENEDETTI

Stanislavski: An Introduction  
79pp. Methuen. Paperback, £2.95,  
0 413 50030 6

Stanislavski was an awkward and ungainly young actor, plagued by physical ailment, lack of vocal stamina, and general absence of control over his actions. Despite his intellectual awareness of the need for truth, honesty and observation on stage, he was susceptible to "theatrical cliché" as soon as he began to rehearse ("Thigh boots, a sword and a cloak were fatal to him"). As Jean Benedetti makes clear in this lucid and soundly researched handbook, Stanislavski's approach to acting training is best understood in terms of his personal search for release from the temptations of stage gestures, well-tried intonations, and standard emotional formulae.

Benedetti consistently places Stanislavski's ideas in precise contexts, demonstrating how they evolved, and were tested, during his fifty-year career as an actor and director. His writings were shaped by his reading of contemporary psychology, the

observation of great European actors (Salvini, Chaliapin, Duse) at work, and his own direction of, and performance in, the major plays of Chekhov, Ibsen and Gorki at the Moscow Art Theatre. It is this interplay between theory and practice which makes Stanislavski worth reading today.

Although his method is partially codified in *An Actor Prepares* and *Building a Character*, Stanislavski remained free from the rigidity and complacency of the artistic guru. During the last five years of his life, he expressed a healthy dissatisfaction with his system, questioning the value of months of meticulous research and analysis as a prelude to rehearsal: "With a stuffed head and empty heart the actor goes on stage and simply can't do anything." As Benedetti cautions, his work should be read for the questions he raises, and alternatives he suggests, concerning the creative work of the actor. Despite the pretensions of certain of his American disciples, Stanislavski never intended to formulate a text-book of irreversible solutions.

Marcy Kahn

## Strutting and fretting

Stanley Wells

JOHN ORRELL

The Quest for Shakespeare's Globe  
188pp. Cambridge University Press,  
£20,  
0 521 24751 9

PETER THOMSON

Shakespeare's Theatre  
190pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul,  
£8.95,  
0 7100 9480 9

JUDITH COOK

Shakespeare's Players  
182pp. Harlap, £8.95,  
(paperback, £5.50),  
0 245 53824 0

MARK TAYLOR

Shakespeare's Darker Purpose: A  
Question of Incest  
203pp. New York: AMS Press  
(distributed in the UK by Eurospan),  
£22.50,  
0 404 62277 1

At a time when usable and highly authentic reconstructions, in London and Detroit, of Elizabethan and Jacobean theatres are not merely planned but seem quite likely to come into being, studies of their structure and of conditions of performance in them take on a more than academic importance. And it is a particularly happy chance that, within a few days of the dedication of the site in Southwark on which Sam Wanamaker and his associates plan the reconstruction not only of the Globe but of a Stuart indoor theatre, there should appear from a member of his advisory committee a book of such distinction as John Orrell's *The Quest for Shakespeare's Globe*.

There were in fact two Globe theatres. The first was itself a reconstruction of London's earliest playhouse, the Theatre, after it had been dismantled in dramatic circumstances in December 1598. The Theatre was in Shoreditch; its timbers had to be transported across the Thames to the Bankside. The reconstructed building, now the Globe, burned down in 1613 when the firing of cannon during a performance of Shakespeare and Fletcher's *Henry VIII* set fire to its thatch. A second Globe arose on the same foundations, so Orrell feels justified in regarding the search for the structural features of either theatre as substantially the same enterprise.

The relationship between the first and the second Globe is important because more valuable pictorial evidence survives about the later than about the earlier theatre. The crucial documents are two drawings made by Wenceslaus Hollar in 1640, along with his sketching of 1647, *The View of London*, based on them. One of the drawings, now in the Yale Center for British Art, has been known to theatre historians since 1949; in it, the labels on the Globe and the Bear-baiting House (the Hope) are reversed. The other drawing, first published in *Shakespeare Survey* as recently as 1978, is sketchier. It is in the John Rylands Library, Manchester, and Orrell shows that a third Hollar drawing, of 1638, in the Pepysian Library, Cambridge, is a companion piece, and that together the two form a contiguous panorama of London. The drawings are small. Even in the larger – the one at Yale – the Globe measures only 22 millimetres across. But Orrell has developed a remarkable and fascinating way of reading the pictorial evidence which, he persuades us, provides extraordinarily precise information about the theatre's structure.

Examining a different Hollar view of London, and supposing it to have been made from "Durham House", Orrell finds that, when the identifiable landmarks are plotted on sight-lines drawn to positions traced from a modern map, the correspondence is exact. Merely in passing, he identifies for the first time a representation in this drawing of Shakespeare's Blackfriars theatre. Then he identifies by what means Hollar might have obtained such topographic exactitude. He finds the answer in a surveyors'

handbook of 1611 which describes a device resembling one depicted nearly a century before by Dürer, in which an artist views his subject through a fixed eyepiece set so that he can draw on a flat sheet of glass placed before it. The device, and variations upon it, were well known to Italian artists, but Orrell believes that the handbook of 1611 represents its introduction to English readers. Only by positing the use of such an instrument can he account for the degree of accuracy found in the Durham House view, on which "Even the very width of the White Tower is exactly stated in relation to the major intervals between, say, the Tower and St. Paul's, or between St. Sepulchre and Bow Church."

From this, Orrell goes on to enquire whether "Hollar's own Long View, with its tantalizing picture of the Globe and the Hope", was "the result of surveys made at the topographical glass". Establishing that the point of view from which the panorama was made was the tower of St Saviour's Church (now Southwark Cathedral), and comparing it with the two other major, roughly contemporary panoramas of London, by Vischer and Norden, Orrell arrives by an impressive and formidable series of excursions into the stratosphere of higher mathematics at the conclusion that each "is based on an accurate survey made according to the principles of the topographical glass".

Attempting to test his case at first hand, he climbs the tower of Southwark Cathedral "accompanied by a very cheerful assistant verger", and finds that "as one stands there looking out over what Hollar saw, now so much changed and yet so much the same; an angel of history dances among the pinnacles". But in a self-admittedly whimsical tone of the sort this admirably written book, he adds "Or perhaps it was just a pigeon."

Hollar's topographical precision was already recognized: Vladimir Denksien lays great stress on it in his study *Hollar's Drawings*; but while Orrell admits the possibility that the artist's accuracy was "arrived at by a mechanical process", he makes a strong case for the use of a glass or other device.

In any case, the implication of his findings is that, from Hollar's first-hand drawing, we should be able to measure, within the tolerances we have now become accustomed to, the very size and proportions of the theatre built by Shakespeare's company for the acting of his plays. His detailed analysis of the pictorial evidence leads him to the conclusion that the Globe was 102.35 feet across, and that the nearby theatre in Hollar's drawing, the Hope, was 99.9 feet. These dimensions are, as he remarks, "rather larger than has hitherto been generally understood" (though as he also acknowledges, "Richard Hosley, surely the most meticulous scholar to address himself to this problem, had already concluded that the second Globe was about 100 ft. across"); and they are also rather surprisingly close to each other. But the coincidence "tends to confirm both readings" because the surviving contract for the Hope requires that theatre to be the same size as the Swan, because the Globe drawn by Hollar was built on the same foundations as the first, and because the first Globe had been made of the timbers of James Burbage's Theatre. So the evidence derived from Hollar's drawing "implies that there was a customary plan that had been traditional since Burbage established it in 1576".

An interesting effect of these conclusions is to reduce the significance of arguments by analogy with the Fortune Theatre, "a square house quite different from any of the others in plan", whose contract requires that it have an overall dimension of 80 feet. This contract is an infuriating document because it requires the stage and tiring house to be "contrived and fashioned like unto the stage of the said playhouse called the Globe". If only it had spelt out the details, we should have had a uniquely informative account of the essential features of at least one Elizabethan theatre.

The Fortune's stage was to measure

43 feet across; scholars have tended to assume that the same was true of the Globe. Professor Orrell undermines this assumption by seeking a rationale for the plan of the Fortune. The plot of his argument is that the contract was made with Peter Street, a carpenter; that carpenters measured by means of a rod 16 feet 6 inches long; that 43 feet is "the altitude (to within about 1/2 in.) of an equilateral triangle whose sides are three rods (or 49 ft 6 in.)", and that such triangles were used by land surveyors to measure area and "by masons and carpenters in the lay-out of buildings, according to the method called *ad triangulum*". Having used this method for the stage, Orrell argues, Street and his colleagues then used for the foundations of the outer wall the related *ad quadratum* system, producing a square with sides of "79 ft. 3/4 in., or within 2 1/2 in. of what the contract led us to expect". On this basis Orrell concludes that the Globe stage was 49 ft. 6 in. wide, and that the frame developed from it, also by the *ad quadratum* method, would therefore have an overall dimension of 99 ft. (six rods) – very close to the figure obtained by an analysis of the Hollar documents.

A Globe larger than previously estimated has the advantage of making more plausible contemporary statements that similar theatres could hold over 3,000 spectators; and Orrell produces entirely convincing evidence that the seating arrangements allowed less space for each spectator than has previously been supposed. He offers a fascinating analysis of a drawing with accompanying text of what has previously been thought of as a German theatre but which Orrell now demonstrates is of the hall of Christ Church, Oxford, as arranged for a performance before King James I in 1605. Working from this, Orrell calculates that the Globe could hold some 3,350 people: rather more than double the capacity of the Olivier or the Royal Shakespeare Theatre. This is consonant with the report of the Spanish ambassador in 1624 that at performances of Middleton's anti-Spanish play, *A Game at Chess*, the second Globe held more than three thousand persons "on the day that the audience was smallest".

Orrell's techniques are highly specialized, and a thorough testing of them would be laborious. His findings may be greeted with a degree of scepticism; advance publication of some of them has already sparked off disagreement. But they are solidly based and persuasively argued. In the maturity of his scholarship, the lucid originality of his approach, the lucid grace of his exposition, the courtesy of its tone both to the reader and to other scholars, and its physical presentation, this is an exemplary study.

There is, however, one matter in which I am at odds with John Orrell. Discussing the Globe as "an acoustical auditorium", he claims that "what is most interesting about the Globe – what would be most interesting if it were to be reconstructed now – is not the comparatively trivial business of how many stage doors it had, or how high its stage was, or whether there was a 'discovery space' or an inner stage, but what it sounded like". The plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries have come down to us so imperfectly that precise knowledge about these "comparatively trivial" matters would be of inestimable help to editors in clarifying the imperfect stage directions of the original texts, and so to directors in attempting to realize them either for reconstructed auditoria of Shakespeare's time or for the modern theatre.

Such directors will find much to interest them in Peter Thomson's *Shakespeare's Theatre*, in which (following the pattern established by John Russell Brown for the excellent series *Theatre (Production Studies)*), he provides first an account of Shakespeare's company, then a study of three individual plays – *Twelfth Night*, *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* – as performed by this company. Whereas Orrell's book is a work of fundamental research, Thomson's is a synthesis and interpretation, depending partly on such studies as E. K. Chambers's *The Elizabethan Stage* and G. E. Bentley's *The Profession of Dramatist in*



"Swan Theatre" (1943) by the San Francisco photographer John Hagemeier, reproduced from volume 16 of *The Archive*, available from the Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona, 843 E. University Boulevard, Tucson, Arizona.

*Shakespeare's Time*, and also on the author's own experience and expertise as a director of plays in university departments of drama. In some respects his book is complementary to Michael Hattaway's *Elizabethan Popular Theatre*. In the same series, reviewed in these columns on December 17, 1982, Hattaway offers fuller information about theatre practice in general; Thomson concentrates on the management and organization of the Lord Chamberlain's Men at the first Globe, from 1599 to 1608. His account of the company – interestingly stresses its cohesiveness and its general respectability. Noting, for instance, that one of the actors, Augustine Phillips, made numerous bequests to his fellows, including his best clothes to an apprentice and his musical instruments to another, he remarks that "There seems no doubt that the Chamberlain's Men were Phillips' family." Thomson paints a group of shrewd business men conscious of their status attendant upon their profession – the knowledge that theatres would be closed in time of plague, the troubles of censorship and other forms of government control, problems caused by bad weather in a theatre that was partly open to the elements, as well as the fear simply that their performances might not please. Such a company had to be adaptable, especially because of the varied conditions in which they encountered on provincial tours. And the playwrights had to be willing to meet the company's needs, even if it meant that their plays – such as *Macbeth* – had to be adapted.

Professor Thomson is aware of the imperfect nature of the evidence that has come down to us, and exercises an attractive mixture of caution and shrewd common sense on doubtful issues: thus, though we know too little about the composition of audiences, "It is quite inconceivable that the great plays of the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras had to reach the discerning audience across an intervening mob of noisy, ignorant yokos." Admitting that reconstructions of the Globe have always betrayed the prejudices of their notional architects, he declares his own predisposition towards a structure "in which plays were performed with a minimum of scenic and mechanical aids, in costumes whose lavishness would surprise us more than it surprised the first audiences."

These views colour his treatment of the three individual plays, each of which he approaches in a distinct way. In *Twelfth Night* he concerns himself with the play's music, with properties and costume and, more generally, with time and place in the play's scheme. Though his criticism is firmly based in practical realities, it is not redactively

so; indeed, at times it is indistinguishable from a more traditional kind of literary criticism, as in the analysis of the conditional as "the fundamental mood of the play". Men of the theatre have to pay attention to minor characters as well as to protagonists, and Thomson is excellent on the role of Sebastian.

Actors and the theatre occupy a more central and pervasive role in *Hamlet* than in any other Shakespeare play, so it is not surprising that this play should stimulate the best criticism in the book. There is a contrast with Orrell's emphasis on the Globe as an "acoustical auditorium" in Thomson's statement "We should not be fooled by critics who assert the primacy of the voice in Elizabethan acting. Physical grace and accuracy were at least as important." Thomson makes us conscious of the variety of response that the play calls up in us – response to a necessary variety of acting styles, to the physical prowess of the performer (in which Shakespeare's interest is evidenced in the "unnecessary invention" of Claudius' account of Laertes), to the sounds of drama and trumpet, to the significances of dumb show, mime and patterns of costume. But he alerts us, too, to the play's ideas, to its techniques of stimulating thought, to its "unusual tendency to expose its characters as actors". The chapter on *Macbeth* is more practical, offering, by a scene-by-scene analysis, "to bring into focus the nature and significance of the stage-band's responsibilities during the first performances of *Macbeth*".

Peter Thomson writes in a crisp, sharp, unflinching style; Ben Jonson is not the only playwright who has felt like killing an actor, but he is one of the very few who actually did it; "Unable to get a word in edgeways, perhaps, Polonius's wife has passed silently to the grave." In general his scholarship is adequate to his task, though Jonson's *Prologue to Every Man in His Humour* cannot properly be used as evidence of theatre practice in 1598 as it was written for the play's revised version, probably in 1612-13.

Whereas Peter Thomson moves surefootedly and with discrimination among his authorities, Judith Cook, in *Shakespeare's Actors*, is tentative and partial in her handling of historical material. She takes the leading men's roles in Shakespeare, provides sketchy, unreliable, gossipy ground to the plays and to performance of the past, and quotes extensively from statements by leading actors of the present day, including many members of the Royal Shakespeare Company who have allowed her to tape-record them. Many of them, in their turn, speak in an anecdotal, often hyperbolic and impressionistic

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manner about their roles. The book may be of interest to the actors' fans, and from time to time we learn something about the way the actors approach their roles, but they tend to talk about them in a very generalized fashion rather than about the moment-by-moment engagement between the actor, his role and the production.

In *Shakespeare's Darker Purpose*, Mark Taylor writes about incest in Shakespeare's plays. There is one apparently incestuous union in Shakespeare which is of real critical interest. Hamlet regards his mother's remarriage with his uncle as incestuous, but it is questionable whether Shakespeare's contemporaries would have taken the same view of marriage to a dead husband's brother. Mark Taylor does not mention this problem. Apart from *Pericles*, in which incest is overt, the plays he considers are those in which incestuous desires are scarcely, if at all, conscious and are never made explicit. All relate to fathers and daughters.

Taylor writes with enthusiasm, even on some subjects, with good sense; but his judgment deserts him whenever a father and daughter come within his range of vision. Indeed, the father needed not even be present. Isabella (in *Measure for Measure*) "may be as shocked as she is by Angelo's advances because she is maintaining her purity for her father". Egæus, Polonius, Prospero, Lear, Larentes, Alonso, Brabantio, all are motivated by unconscious sexual desire for their daughters; the fact that they may be harsh to them only proves this the more strongly, because the daughters' becoming what the father "covets and cannot have is, in his mind, the primal act of filial disobedience, an intentional gesture of supreme mockery, for which no punishment is too stern".

Taylor's aim appears to be to demonstrate archetypal patterns which may be held to confer significance upon certain plot elements, and to account for the power. It is a reasonable aim. I have some sympathy with, for instance, his claim that Robert Greene's *Pseudos* (on which Shakespeare based *The Winter's Tale*) is a "mythically resonant" to an exceptional degree; certainly its popularity for two centuries after its composition would support this. But in his interpretation of Shakespeare, Taylor strains evidence ludicrously. In *The Merchant of Venice*, Gratiano, speaking to Nerissa about his ring, declares, "Would he were gelt that had it, for my part . . .". To Taylor, this signifies that "Gratiano, unconsciously wishing to castrate his wife lest she, in her infidelity, figuratively castrate him, is doing nothing less than taking an oath upon his penis." And a laborious attempt to relate Pelagianism to certain characters of Shakespeare depends on the fact that Morgan, the real name of Belarius in *Cymbeline*, "is Welsh for the sea" and "recalls the original name of Pelagius, which is Greek also for the man from the sea", and that the name "Belarius" has six of its letters in common with "Pelagius". To deduce from this a meaningful relationship between characters in Shakespeare who come from the sea and the tenets of Pelagianism strains credulity.

## Imagine the scene

Roger Savage

*Painting* is concerned with the masters and journeymen in a large movement of taste: a movement from emphasis on stock scenes usable in a variety of settings to the creation of scenes specifically for a single show; from high humanist symmetry celebrating the mysteries of perspective and absolutism to a more romantic, democratic asymmetry; from scenes elegantly backing the dramatic action to scenes threatening to devour it; and from a cheerful unconcern with specific place and time to a fascination with the antiquarian and the topographical. Miss Rosenfeld connects this broad shift with more technical shifts in the scene-dock and the paint room: the use of the wing-and-shutter scene (which changed magically before one's eyes) giving way to the development of the "set" scene (which might call for an act-drop to cover its setting up); generalized lighting by candle and oil becoming localized lighting by gas; the domination of a small, reticent profession by a few foreign scene-painters yielding to the growth of a sturdy native school able to make its presence felt on playbills.

Seeing things as she does through the point-room door, Rosenfeld quite understandably tends to present these changes as scrupulously documented — as advances. Johnson would have disagreed, perceiving piled on top of the new, the old. Even Thomas Gainsborough told Garrick in 1770s that truth (and doubtless sense and nature too) had become the victim of the new techniques, that "eyes and ears are thoroughly debauched by glare and noise". Yet on one level Rosenfeld is right. Scenography was a much more versatile, ingenious, lucrative and respected art in later Georgian Britain than in earlier. Does it follow, though, that there was necessarily an advance in the absolute quality of the eye's most outstanding work? It is hard to say. Continental parallels suggest not. Berain's designs for Lully in the late seventeenth century are neither better nor worse than Schinkel's for Mozart in the nineteenth; and at the Drottningholm Court Theatre near Stockholm the earlier, neo-classical sets were just as good as the later picturesque ones.

Of course it is easy to compare. Berain and Schinkel because of the fine detail sketches that survive, while at Drottningholm the actual objects are still there, and during the season their replicas are put through their paces nightly under simulated candle-light (proving incidentally that gas was not necessarily an advance). But in Britain there is the Regency forest-set at Richmond and not a lot more where actual objects are concerned; and as for hard evidence in sketches and paintings, outside the big early nineteenth-century archive of work of the Greve family there is not even a huge amount of that, and what there is is not always easy to interpret. Rosenfeld carefully discusses and helpfully reproduces early examples of such things as crisp monochrome (though it is a pity they do not include some of the Hogarth theatre pictures, more of the fine playhouse interiors with plays in progress done by Pugin and Rowlandson, and all the surviving de Louthembourg plaquettes). Yet most of her illustrations, however interesting historically, are fairly unimpressive — just as her narrative has to chronicle a great deal of biographical and financial small beer — and among the really arresting pictures James Thornhill's sketches for *Antiope* at Drury Lane in 1705 are surely just as accomplished and atmospheric as Clarkson Stanfield's pantomime sketches for the same house 120 years later.

Half-way between Thornhill and Stanfield comes the boro — perhaps the tragic hero — of the book, Philippe Jacques de Loutherbourg. Though he only worked for about ten years in the London theatre, he clearly did many rich, strange and influential things with light and the set scene for Garrick, Sheridan, and Kemble. Rosenfeld presents him quite rightly as the focus of the exclusive infatuation of creative changes in the 1770s; and yet we are left with a double sadness. For one thing the hundreds of models he made for his decor, extant when his estate was sold

off in 1812, have vanished except for a tantalizing half dozen. (What a revelation it would be if an accidental find revealed the number even to twenty, the number of the fascinating maquettes for Paris Opéra productions of the 1750s which survive at Chambord and which are identified in an article by Jérôme de la Gorce in the October 1983 number of *Early Music*.) For another thing, de Louthembourg's work was largely on very transient and trivial shows. It is hard not to feel that most of those pantomimes, burlesques and travel-spectaculars were a monstrous waste of his time and talent. And it is significant that his collaboration with Sheridan, his only collaboration with a living writer of something like genius, should have been over the rather rickety *Camp and over the Critic*, where he led the grand marine display ostensibly devised by Mr Puff for his egotistical tragedy *The Spanish Armada*. "Now for my magnificence," says Puff, echoing the promise of his model of a century before, Mr Bayes in *The Rehearsal*: "I'll show you the greatest scene that ever England saw! I mean not for words, for those I don't value; but for state, show and magnificence."

That literate drama should have been at loggerheads with scenic magnificence, and that if anything the rift should have got worse as the eighteenth century went on, was certainly one of the wilder vicissitudes of taste; but it was one for which Johnson himself and like verbal-puritanical thinkers were as guilty as the spectacle-freaks. It was a fairly isolated voice that could say of a De Louthembourg pantomime décor (in a *Westminster Magazine* of 1776): "we could not help wishing that the talents of this man, instead of being used to save paltry things from damnation, were united to those of Shakespeare, to astonish or to enchant us into virtue."

If there is something Canute-like in the way Johnson's Drury Lane Prologue tries to stop the tides of music and spectacle which a few decades afterwards would join to produce English melodrama (and something molo-like in his not seeing that a form such as melodrama — to say nothing of opera — might have moral standards and effects which were useful and salutary), then there is a sad irony in the way the Prologue is in one important respect a prologue to almost nothing. Formalism, libertinism and mere theatricality are banished, and the public's help is enlisted in clearing the stage for a new theatrical renaissance of passion, imagination and toying verily which will equal the earlier Renaissance that produced Shakespeare. But manifestly — and in spite of a trickle of excellent comedies — that second renaissance did not happen. Indeed the rot may have set in ten years before Johnson's prologue, when Henry Fielding took himself and a lot of the energies of the English drama off to the novel, where the energies stayed well beyond Garrick's death. If scenic virtuoso formed the rising age at all in the later eighteenth century, as Johnson hoped it would, it was largely the virtue of, and in, earlier revived and revamped plays.

Garrick himself did a lot of the reviving and revamping, and the final five volumes of the Pedicord-Bergmann edition of his plays now bring together a dozen Shakespeare adaptations he was involved with (including two versions each of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *The Tempest*, one concrete and one not), and fifteen alterations of other dramatists, from Johnson and Fletcher to William Whitehead leaning on Cornolio and Aaron Hill adapting Voltaire. The edition, which comes from the Southern Illinois atlas of the formidable Highfill-Burnham-Langhans *Biographical Dictionary of Stage Personnel* and wears its colours, can be added to Professor Highfill's Garrick life in the *Dictionary*, Kahrl and Stone's *David Garrick: A Critical Biography*, the Little-Wilson-Kahrl collection of his letters and the central volumes of *The London Stage 1660-1800* to constitute what Johnson might have called a lasting tomb for the remarkable little man, though not one which crumbles his spirit.

It must be said that the Pedicord-Bergmann collection of the adaptations and alterations has a few features. Too many of the illustrations are woefully reproduced and most are under-captioned; several chunks of editorial matter are duplicated needlessly from volume to volume, and the apparatus of extremely brief glosses provided for each play is not only in some need of a Latinist but also does not seem sure of its audience: will anyone likely to be using these books really need the standard school-Shakespeare annotations to the Shakespeare versions, or glosses on words like "di", "seraglio", "labor" or "guinea" in the notes to the others? But that said, it is a valuable collection, with the actual texts easy on the eye, sensibly edited and supplied in each case with an essay on the relationship between version and original which does the academic "compare and contrast" thing informatively and with spirit. The result is a convenient and rewarding museum of mid-eighteenth-century taste designed by one of that century's great taste-makers.

Taste's role in these versions is to tighten, to lighten, to clarify, to prune and to purge the original so that it can take its place as a good piece of theatrical Palladianism: moral, diverting and playhouse-trained. In some cases this involves extreme measures than in others, but in all cases Garrick is the honest broker, the matchmaker concerned that his chosen play should show its best face to the Georgian world and that the Georgian world should be induced to like what it sees. Since his audience insists on being beguiled with the charms of sound and the pomp of show, he will at least make sure that the little fairy opera he wants have librettos made from the best Shakespearean originals and that the musical spectaculars he revises (the Dryden-Purcell *King Arthur* and the Thomson-Arno *Alfred*) are well crafted, improving and unfrivolous. Since it is clearly the case that the past ages of British drama should be represented on his stage, but equally the case that (as the Drury Lane Prologue pointed out) so many old dramatists are either formalists or libertines, Garrick will relieve Ben Jonson of some of his excessive art by reducing the proliferations of *The Alchemist* and *Every Man in his Humour* through "numerous and intricate omissions" (as the *Alchemist* "Advertisements" put it); and he will help rescue those fine but beleaguered ladies *The Country Wife* and *The Provoked Wife* from the smut and cynicism and profanity of their Restoration origins so they can have a second chance in a polluter world. And since the best Georgian dramatic mode would, as Colley Cibber puts it, combine "a Racine's judgement with a Shakespeare's fire", Garrick will try to give a strong British spirit to three adaptations of French classical tragedy: *The Roman Father*, *Zara* and *Mahomet*.

As for how much Palladianizing, how much added Racinean judgment, Shakespeare himself needs to become a good Drury Lane author, this is a problem for Garrick, since he is at once the public's humble servant and an unashamed Bordolator who makes a point of being seen as the chief priest of the cult. He solves the problem provisionally with Shakespeare versions which are pieces of good-hearted pragmatism. Controversial as they were and are, it is at least arguable that if anything, Garrick's own skills as an actor and manager, they seemed to pre-empt Georgian Nature, Sense and Truth, and so maybe contributed as much as political censorship and the rise of the novel to the aborting of that second renaissance which should have followed the Drury Lane Prologue in 1747. It is significant that when, thirty years later, his grateful company gave Garrick a medal for services rendered to the Actors' Fund, it should have shown him as the energetic Roscius (throwing back a curtain to reveal that Nature, the many-breasted Diana of the Ephesians, was Siamese-twinning with a rapt Shakespeare in the act of imaginative creation. It was a hard set to follow.

ANN SADDLEMYER (Editor)

The Collected Letters of John Millington Synge  
Volume 1: 1871-1907

385pp. Oxford University Press. £30.  
0 19 812678 6

The language of Synge's plays is peculiar to himself; he had no predecessors and no imitators. He forged his dramatic manner from a handful of songs, folk tales and some colourful Gaelic figures of speech. He travelled to out-of-the-way places and emerged bearing a good supply of incidents and ideas. Wicklow, Kerry and the Aran Islands yielded up a store of decorative material. Peasant flamboyance, as in the matter of lamenting the dead or recalling past acts of violence, held a strong appeal for him. His plays go on for rich and fanciful imagery as well as embodying a form of Celtic fluency unchecked by dryness or awkwardness. The effect of this fluency is hypnotic, whether the need is poignant, held, or wistful. Such a distinctive style, however, inevitably carries a built-in element of self-parody. Synge's, moreover, is entirely facetious; his intention was not to reproduce the patterns of rural speech, either in Irish or English, but to superimpose stylistic flourishes in one language on the idioms of the other. It's not, as some critics have asserted, a matter of literal translation; Synge wanted to get the utmost picturesque savour out of each expression he adapted. The Irish-language sources for a number of his

lines make it plain that the original versions carried nothing like so high a charge of quaintness.

He was born in 1871, in time to catch the tail-end of the Celtic antiquarianism initiated by Sir Samuel Ferguson and given a popular touch by Standish O'Grady; its legacy for Synge's generation was the "fantastic unmodern, ideal, breezy, springdayish Cuchulainoid" outlook which so exasperated the playwright in the well-known letter he sent in 1904 to the friend from his Paris days, Stephen McKenna. Having had enough, for the time being, of Angus, Maeve and Fand, and all the rest of the "pale windy people" who fitted in and out of contemporary literature, Synge sought about for something a touch and lustre to put in their place, and bit upon the following revitalizing course:

We'll stretch in Red Dan Sall's ditch,  
And drink in Tubber fair,  
Or poach with Red Dan Philly's bitch  
The badger and the hare.  
Here, Synge is advocating a return to the plainness and robustness of certain Gaelic folk songs, some of which had recently been rediscovered in Connacht by Douglas Hyde. Synge's guidelines for a realistic approach, however, went away in his own hands; his poetry is one thing, his plays another. The wayward antics of Synge's characters, in conjunction with the lush lines he put in their mouths, produced in certain members of his earliest audiences an outraged impression that Irish sensibility and Irish verbiage were being held up to ridicule. What they took for mockery

was, in fact, admiration; all the same, native doubts about the Ascendancy playwright's attitude weren't altogether as fatuous as it might appear. Anyone might be excused for reading a humorous intent into lines like these about unmanageable sheep: "They were that willful they were running off into one man's bit of oats, and another man's bit of hay, and tumbled into the red bogs till it was more like a pack of old goats than sheep they were." Mountain ewes is a queer breed, Nora Burke, and I'm not used to them at all . . .

The charge of travestying the national character was the first that poor Synge had to contend with; a worse transgression, though, as far as his Catholic audience was concerned, was the aspersen he appeared to cast on Irish purity by conjuring up an image of some women in their underwear: "It's Pegeen I'm seeking only, and what'd I care if you brought me a drift of chosen females, bringing in their shifts itself, maybe, from this place to the Eastern world?" The subsequent ado, as the feelings of the audience got the better of them, went down to posterity as the *Playboy* riots; perhaps this was the only occasion when Irish belligerence erupted over an issue concerning bedice and soul. Gaelic League members who took part in the protest did so, presumably, in ignorance of the fact that the national language had produced a literature in which references to this particular item of underclothing weren't unknown; as an example we have the folk song "Eadar Caiséal agus Uí-Cholláin" ("Between Caiséal and the Green Wood") in which a girl rejected by one man declares that there are plenty of others who would be happy to take her in her shift (kine), that was all she had. Synge, understandably annoyed by the business ("Did you hear that we had to have 57 peepers in to keep the stage from being rushed, and that for four nights not a word could be heard for booing?") got off to Stephen McKenna an entertaining account of Lady Gregory's first action in the crisis. She went backstage to consult the Abbey Theatre charwoman about whether or not a breach of decorum had in fact been committed. The verdict was that "chemise" was the only acceptable word for the garment.

The outcry provoked by Synge's plays was modulated gradually until it had turned into an ovation; by 1910 the Gaelic League, or on the other hand, its representative, had proclaimed a reversal of opinion in a magazine article which included the work of Synge, along with the *Táin Bó Cuailgne* (*Cattle Raid of Cooley*) and the anonymous ballad "Slán le Pádráil Súilleil" ("Farewell to Patrick Súilleil"), among the glories of the Gaelic tradition. The reclamation came too late to gratify the playwright, who had been dead for a year. It's also, to be truthful, an assessment scarcely more judicious than the earlier nationalist denunciations. Those who have argued that Synge's literary impulse was satiric, reading into his creation of Christy Mahon, for example, an intention to deflate the heroic Cuchulain figure of Irish romance. This is a plausible and illuminating speculation. What's certain, though, is that Synge's own writings provided for the satirist or parodist a target even more conspicuous than anything contained in the Irish sagas. Here is Flann O'Brien: "I have personally met in the streets of Ireland persons who are clearly out of Synge's plays. They talk and dress like that, and damn the drink they'll swill but the mug of porter in the long nights after Samhain."

Synge's verbal confessions lend themselves to parody; but the author of the plays appears to have experienced no compulsion to send himself up to his other writings, either to indicate a degree of knowledge about the mode he invented, or to parody a nervous disinclination to take himself and his works too seriously. Only in one sentence does he come at all close to joking about his stylistic eccentricities. "Remember in three little weeks there'll be another new moon, and then with the help of God, we'll have great walking and talking at the fall of night", he promises her. This mild

burlesque is followed abruptly by a return to his brisker epistolary manner: "Do write me some decent letters before Tuesday's post."

The qualities that go into the most captivating correspondence — discursiveness, a talent for gossip, the ability to turn personal mishaps into the stuff of comedy, and so forth — are largely absent in Synge. His descriptive gift is exhibited very sparingly in this volume. A view of some corsemen-moss-pickers in Kerry — "Dozens of men & women . . . out in the sea up to their waists — in old clothes, poling about fer it under the water" — is virtually the only extract to mirror the playwright's concern with pungent effects.

At their worst, Synge's letters are coloured by jealousy, whining, petulance, skittishness or dejection. Naturally, it is Molly Allgood who bears the brunt of his low moods. Worse, she is made to feel responsible for causing them ("I cannot understand why you treat me so badly"). He is constantly, he would have her know, tugging out in the rain to post letters to her, to the detriment of his health, and becoming fearfully aggrieved at her failure to do the same: "I don't know why you will not write to me, it is very strange."

Molly Allgood ("Meiré O'Neill") was the Abbey Theatre actress who took the part of Pegeen Mike in the earliest production of Synge's *Playboy*. The author quickly fell under the spell of this capricious nineteen-year-old from a lower-middle-class Dublin family, whom he began addressing as "Changeling". However, the playwright's beguilement was never sufficient to discourage him from assuming a pedagogic role in his fiancée's life. In his letters he proposes to take her education in hand, reminds her constantly how young and foolish she is, despises her taste in hats, complains about the shortness and infrequency of the notes she sends him, criticizes her handwriting, and flies into a paddy over her insignificant betrayals of his trust. Molly proves less tractable than he might have wished, but the alliance endures none the less. Whenever the quarrelling stops, the two go off on long romantic outings in the Wicklow hills ("Do not come of course if it is a wet day"); and Synge finally summons up the courage to mention Molly to his mother. Virtually everything about the relationship seems discordant, though Molly's representatives, or on the other hand, her representatives, and her fastidiousness, her vitality and his ill-health. In fact Molly in the end developed on to two ailments of her own, perhaps in retaliation for the pathetic reports she received in nearly every post: "I have a sharp headache, and the sweat is running down my face with the exertion of writing these few lines." The beginning of 1907 saw a brief exchange of letters between a miserable pair, one with a sore eye and the other with a sore toe.

The querulousness of the invalid, and the discontent of the incapacitated and suspicious lover — these feelings conspire to exclude from Synge's letters to Molly the possibility of gracefulness, frivolity or anything at all in the way of euphoric comment. A letter for him in any case is not a medium for effective or enduring self-expression. The bulk of the correspondence collected in this volume is flat, plain and businesslike in tone ("I very much regret delay in sending you the conditions we spoke of"; "Russell and I will draw up an

agenda paper of the matters that are to go before the meeting"; and so on). The vicissitudes of the Abbey Theatre, the internal dissensions which racked it in its earliest years and the criticism it drew from the extreme nationalist faction, occasionally obliged Synge (co-opted on to the board of directors in 1905, and forming, along with Yeats and Lady Gregory, the third in the formidable Abbey triumvirate) to set out in writing his views regarding theatrical policy and the handling of troublemakers. However, a concern with particulars, natural in the circumstances, but ultimately making for tiresomeness ("He thought she was not going to sign . . . I heard barely that Miss W. had signed . . ."), as well as what we might see as an excess of caution and tact, leaves Synge's letters to his co-directors scarcely more absorbing than those to his publishers. Ann Saddlemyer, an indefatigable editor, collector of information and annotator, has included every extant communication of her subject's for the years covered, down to the note to Joyce (1903) which reads in its entirety: "You will say an it is all the same to me." Mmke of that what you will. There is much in the letters, indeed, that's no longer available to elucidation, like this message for Molly Allgood: "I had no opportunity to speak to Fey about your teeth." The scope for speculation, however, is unrestricted. Did she bite him, or did she just need a new set?

Synge could be productively playful, as in the impressive poem "Queens" in which the eighteenth-century practice of naming mythological women in order to point out the worthlessness of these in comparison with some present-day beauty, finds a down-to-earth outlet. By exuberantly mocking this feature of *aisling* (vision) verse, Synge aligns himself with the last of the great Gaelic poets, Brian Merriman, whose splendid work, "Cult of Meadhan Oidcho" ("The Midnight Court"), was conceived as a burlesque of this particular genre. In his poetry, as in his book about the Aran Islands, Synge keeps well away from the high colour of his dramas and the colourlessness of his correspondence, and shows how his dramatic art might have flourished in an atmosphere more temperate than the one in which he chose to locate it. He is a writer, though, whose work gains in interest as a consequence of the confusions and paradoxes which surrounded both it and him. By celebrating the energy he found within a dying tradition, he aroused extreme hostility in those most strongly committed to preserving that tradition. (He never lost the disapproval either, of critics suspicious of false or of fantasy.) You can make a plausible story out of the fact that Synge's uncle, a Protestant missionary, anticipated the playwright's journey to the Aran Islands — where the uncle went to instruct, though the nephew went to learn, and no doubt the islanders were able to appreciate the difference. One of the family estates in Co Wicklow was the scene of an eviction carried out in person by Synge's brother as late as 1887, a fact of no importance whatever in literary terms, but one guaranteed to stir nationalist agitators of the period, who must have considered it instructive to set the heady going-on of Synge's peasants against this genuine episode of peasant suffering. The name of the place was Glannmore, and its literary associations come right up to date with Seamus Heaney's recent sequence of "Glannmore Sonnet" — dedicated, appropriately enough, to the scholarly and enthusiastic editor of Synge's letters, Anne Saddlemyer.

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## Getting clever

Adam Mars-Jones

TIM JEAL  
Carnforth's Creation  
253pp. Collins. £7.95.  
0 00 221973 5

The Carnforth of Carnforth's Creation is Paul Carnforth, a young man who has unexpectedly inherited not only a title, but the money and property to set it off; the creation is "Rory Craig", a pop star basically manufactured by him from the basic ingredients of the voice, good looks and working-class credibility of a young man called Roy Flannery.

The gimmick which makes this particular advertising campaign special is that "Rory Craig" is presented throughout as an unscrupulous manipulator. His first single, which is also the theme music of a commercial for a new camera, is called "Image Man", and the song by which he comes to be best known, "Getting Clever", advocates exploitation as the only way to survive in the world as it is.

Tim Jeal's novel, set rather too vaguely in the 1960s, attempts a sideways look at a decade rich in myths and styles. His vagueness about details (about who writes Rory Craig's music, for instance) is one of the weaknesses of the project; a reference to Rory's recording company putting out more cash in pre-publicity than anyone had done "since the Stones' second tour" is the nearest that Carnforth's Creation comes to the immediacy of gossip or inside knowledge.

Another disadvantage is the shifting point of view. We are introduced to the book's underlying situation by way of Paul's patrician wife Eleanor, who profoundly disapproves of his flirtation with low life; but to due course we are made privy to the lives not only of Paul and Roy, but also of Matthew, a filmmaker friend of Paul's who is persuaded to make a documentary on the star-making process. Matthew's wife Bridget and even Gemma, Paul's step-sister and sometime lover, get in on the act. Clarity of individual motive is achieved at the expense of a larger continuity.

## Power games

Michael Hofmann

MARGARET CREAL  
The Man Who Sold Prayers  
198pp. Dent. £7.95.  
0 460 04592 X

In the title-story of this collection Margaret Creal describes a Canadian rector who is perversely out of phase with religious fashion, for it is during the revival boom that he loses his faith, and is obliged to make his living by writing prayers to order. After a prosperous, eccentric and unnaturally successful spell at this, his hand is seized up and his faith returns, whereupon he re-embraces his original vocation. It is presumably for this story in particular that Mary McCarthy offers her glowing praise: "pleasingly wicked" (prominently displayed on the cover), "startling and contrived and ingratiating" (in Creal's uncertain "broad" farce, would-be rigid examples of "satire": Creal's compositions go unscathed with her elaborate, syncretistic psychological analysis).

He thought of the colour as a double-flat, and had always associated it with the cry of the lake-loon, whose night yodeling had often startled him out of childhood sleep, apprising him of loneliness, madness and death.

Certainly, "The Man Who Sold Prayers" does not stand comparison with, say, J. F. Powers's Catholic novel of ecclesiastical commercialism, *Morte D'Urban*, which would have deserved McCarthy's words.

Fortunately, though, this story seems to be the exception here, in the other seven Margaret Creal mixes a better use of her strengths: a humane seriousness, excellent dialogue, and a

convincing appraisal of mother-child relationships. These are features of the best story in the book, "Tales from a pensioner", an account of the confrontation between a clinging, attractive mother and her graceless son. The "tales" are told by the mother; they are observations from her holiday in Florence, pieces of gossip about the other guests. However, she talks on sufferance, frequently interrupted by the callow young man, who finally turns the tale on her and accuses her of having given him "a little morality" about how sons should behave to their mothers. It has only one false note: "Her attitude was that of a hostess eager to please, an unusually difficult guest, one who for reasons not immediately apparent must be treated with delicacy." This, unfortunately, says everything there is to be said, and effectively lays waste twenty pages of meticulously directed dialogue. Many of the other stories are similarly "blasted" by authorial comment. Margaret Creal is obviously fascinated by the transference of power that occurs when people talk, and she manages them flawlessly until, it would seem, she is overcome by the injustice of it all, and this is moved to intervene in person. "At Sunnydale Villa" is set in an old people's hospital, and involves the terrible symbiosis between the dumb, dying Mrs Cameron and her devoted visiting family and the bullying, casual spitefulness of her room-mate Mrs Preston, which, of course, she is unable to point out. Built upon the impossibility of privacy and the tension between speakers and non-speakers, this story is masterly in its sustained pathos - except that is, for Ms Creal's manipulative descriptions of the dignity of suffering. If she could refrain from throwing her righteousness at the reader, she would be a better writer. All the difficult things are said.

## Red in human form . . .

Brian Morton

GABRIELLE LORD  
Tooth and Claw  
160pp. Bodley Head. £7.50.  
0 370 30945 0

Gabrielle Lord's second novel is a taut thriller set - rather unpromisingly - on an isolated smallholding near Sydney. Beth has escaped from the city, and a tragically unhappy affair, to try to live by her wits and good sense, and to recover some sort of personal equilibrium. She lives with only her dog for company, and occasional, flirtatious visits from her neighbour down the valley.

She lives, in other words, alone - until she becomes convinced she is being watched from the hill overlooking her land; her dog stiffens and growls at unexpected intervals, there are noises in the night, and, one morning, a rubber-soled bootprint in the dirt of her yard; finally, she awakens to find all her chickens slaughtered and hung from a wattle tree.

Unable to get help from the

uncomprehending local police, she takes refuge with her neighbours Robin, Garth and Astrid, unsure whether or not they are her persecutors but at least convinced of safety in numbers. In due course, Robin's lover Elvira appears, trying to rekindle their relationship, and Elvira's journal carries half the remaining narrative. The sexual manoeuvring is predictably complicated and tortured as the novel builds to a shattering, thoroughly consistent climax.

As the tension builds, Gabrielle Lord carefully introduces the elements of that climax - a feintly heard motorcycle engine; bees; psilocybin mushrooms; guns; a dilatory policeman; and a whole range of more abstract concerns: Australian bigotry; jealousy; witchcraft; the illusory nature of sexual freedom; violence and criminality. Too many elements, perhaps, but expertly meshed in her plot.

Many of the book's oppositions seem crude and schematic when isolated. City and country are set against each other, but *Tooth and Claw* is no pastoral idyll; nature is fundamentally savage. Neither city nor

country is a refuge from the ills of the other; both are compromised by the presence of the human. The country is invaded by the city's repression and by its technology; in turn the city grows savage (this "tribalism" of city life has become an important Australian theme, made explicit, for example, in Peter Weir's film *The Last Wave*). Magic mushrooms suggest a bucolically innocent attitude to drugs, but the plot hinges on a kilo of heroin, and the mushrooms are eventually put to violent, horrifying use - weakened in impact only by the "fine writing" and excessive descriptive detail which mingles passages in a book that is otherwise sparsely and economically written.

*Tooth and Claw's* emblem and central image is an obscure scarecrow in human shape, constructed from butchered bodies of small animals. Nature's "redness" takes, in Gabrielle Lord's vision, a human form; animals themselves - a dog, a cat, chickens, the loathsome totem on the bill - represent unmanageable impulses the human beings prefer to deny, and, in the end, the return of the repressed; human beings are reduced to creatures in a Pavlovian experiment controlled by the demented watcher on the bill.

devotion he seems to persuade us that these monsters exist, somewhere, and we must be protected from their designs. He growls at the images he has made of them. He would snarl, were it not so undignified.

The plot proceeds entirely according to tradition, by rhetorical discourse. The characters dispute one with another. For a psychomachia by a military author it is a curiously airy battle, apart from a token skirmish in the hills. The herbage and destiny of our nation are talked away, notionally in bedrooms, boardrooms and bureaux, but actually in a vacuum, or at least a suspension of alcohol. "This is all crazy," reflects the hero, champion of light, in a rare thrillerish moment when someone looks him in a room. "We are middle-class, promising Civil Servants, not creatures from a book by Le Carré or Buchan." Could that be a wistful tone in General Sir David Fraser's voice? The herbage is gone; a good clean pistol-shot is nothing to the rumble of the Bomb; policy co-ordinators have ousted the great men; and the only honourable place left for Britain is the bosom of America, home of the brave and free.

## . . . under the bed . . .

Colin Greenland

DAVID FRASER  
August 1982  
235pp. Collins. £8.50.  
0 00 222725 8

In only four years' time a new British government will scrap nuclear arms, withdraw entirely from the EEC and almost so from NATO. However improbable the proposition, it might have made an effective political thriller, even a novel. General Sir David Fraser has made it the basis for a morality exercise, a propaganda tract thinly overlaid with fiction. So transparent is the overlay that it fails to convey any sense that this is 1988. The railways are still running, though with slightly fewer staff. Middle-class lovers call each other "my beloved" and "my heart". There isn't a computer in sight.

A certain archaism is very proper to the morality. 1984 was about 1948. The form has its virtues: clarity of exposition, and engagement with ethical and social issues. You know exactly where you are in a morality,

and exactly where you're supposed to be. Fraser follows these conventions with care. Posed characters, stereotypes representing absolute natural and metaphysical forces, conflict, make and break alliances, struggling for possession of a forfeit soul.

Fraser's allegory is secular and contemporary: the major forces are not Vice and Virtue as such, but a Russia red in tooth and claw and a not-so-Whitehall, with Presidential Joe striding the American eagle as *doux ex modicum*. The forfeit soul is, alas, Britain, stripped naked of her nuclear armour by the good intentions of a foolish and feeble government. Its Prime Minister is "not renowned for robust patriotism". General Sir David Fraser, to full dress uniform on the flyleaf, is renowned and decorated for exactly that. He is a bittar man, who fears that he may see his country delivered into the "thick fingers" of a foreign imperialist race with a "hideous, gold-toothed leer" on their "broad, unmemorable faces". These are the fearsome demons of the morality, "insolent, sneering and contemptuous". So rapt is Fraser's

## . . . or in mask and jaw

David Profumo

DAVID STEPHEN  
Bodach the Badger  
191pp. Century Publishing. £7.95.  
0 7126 0176 7

An experienced naturalist, David Stephen has written several books about wildlife, particularly that of the Scottish Highlands, and his keen sympathetic eye made these delightful and instructive. His prose, fiction sometimes displays similar qualities: the spongy protagonist of this, his second novel, is an admirable "brood" of old men, a "glen" independent of pacific badgers whose adventures during the course of a year comprise the substance of the book. These are strengthened by the author's personal observations - a description of rats being hunted out of frosty sand, for example, is almost identical to that in two previous non-fictional accounts, and such are the sources of the novel's authenticity.

The world through which Bodach swings on his nightly expeditions (teams with nature's variety, humans making only incidental, albeit crucial, appearances, Stephen clearly does not consider that a book ostensibly about animals should at some stage become a book about something else, and to this book's advantage, since he achieves

Walt Disney anthropomorphism and Richard Adams backchat - there is no animal speech, little attributed cognition, and only a soft psychological focus. The glen below Ben Dearg is instead red in mask and jaw, and man is just another predator on the human axis being represented by two contrasting gamekeepers - the heroic Coll, soft-spoken in soft tweeds, and the mercenary Campbell, who turns badgers into sporrans. More interesting, though, are Bodach's encounters with fellow animals, for Stephen evocatively weaves an invisible network of instincts and olfactory signals by which the mammals and birds organize their behaviour.

The novel's main failing is its structural looseness. While the local detail is arresting, there is little evidence of a shaping principle at work, no endoskeleton. There is also precious little narrative tension, something which is not helped by the illustrations at the head of each chapter which serve merely to anticipate the few surprises in store. Intended perhaps to imitate the cycles of "natural" time by removing the usual human points of reference, this looseness instead lends a shambling gait to the plot, rolling it at times into a "bourgeois" of little episodes, making it difficult to gain much purchase on the whole.

Most people, though, will learn a lot about badgers and other wildlife from the book. Its other chief attraction is

David Stephen's often pleasing language, a well-integrated mixture of Scots, Gaelic and English that can, at its best, imbue his descriptions with considerable charm. The author should especially be applauded for his rehabilitation of the word "bike", so often set slang, here used in its early sense of a wisp's nest (or bee-hive), and many scenes are enlivened by dialect usage. "The wind was now snarl on Coll's face, and there was a chlop of frost in the grass." Stephen's first novel, *String Lug the Fox* (1952), sported a helpful glossary, but, there being none here, some readers may need a dictionary in places, for example with this description of two terriers: "unaffiliated, scuffling and trying at a hole under the scurf, and by the yammering of one and the gurgling of the other they were assailed about something 'yird' out of their reach."

First published by Macdonald in 1981, *The Maharajah and Other Stories* by hunter, horseman and naturalist T. H. White is now available in paperback (192pp. Futura, £2.50). The volume contains sixteen stories; in its introduction Sprague comments in his introduction that they "reveal White to have been fascinated by the past, entranced by the English countryside and charmed by the world of children." His comment "White makes the reader extremely aware of nature - nature not idyllic, but frequently red in tooth and claw."

## Utilitarianism versus ipsedixitism

D. D. Raphael

JEREMY BENTHAM  
Constitutional Code: Volume 1  
Edited by F. Rosen and J. H. Burns  
612pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press.  
£48.  
0 19 822608 X

FREDERICK ROSEN

Jeremy Bentham and Representative Democracy: A Study of the 'Constitutional Code'  
255pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press.  
£19.50.  
0 19 822656 X

JEREMY BENTHAM

Deontology, together with A Table of the Springs of Action and the Article on Utilitarianism  
Edited by Amnon Goldworth  
£38.  
394pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press.  
0 19 822609 8

It is now fifteen years since *The Collected Works of Jeremy Bentham* began to appear. Eight volumes were published, between 1968 and 1981, by the Athlone Press, a publishing house of the University of London and which still retains a connection with that institution. The project was recently transferred, largely for financial reasons, to the Clarendon Press of the University of Oxford. Bentham can properly be regarded as belonging to both universities, to Oxford as an alumnus, to London as spiritually a founding father and corporeally a permanent resident. Both presses have done him proud in the standard of production lavished on the *Collected Works*. (Surprisingly, perhaps, Oxford seems to have dropped the standard of the quality of paper used.) And both, alas, are compelled to charge high standards with high prices, despite financial help from outside.

The costs of publication are only part of the expense of this enormous undertaking. One has to add the immense amount of intellectual effort devoted to the project by a little army of scholarly editors and their research assistants. There is so much material still to come that no one knows how many years will be needed to complete the task. In these circumstances one is compelled to ask whether it is all worth

while. I do not find it easy to reach an honest answer to that question, but on the whole I think it should be yes. At any rate the Bentham project has been good a claim on intellectual energy, and the funds to support it, as other modern enterprises of providing complete scholarly editions of the works of voluminous writers, such as Voltaire, Boswell, or J. S. Mill.

The justification has to come from the enlightenment afforded by the new edition, and the best example for its purpose is the treatise *Of Laws in General*, the publication of a complete and reliable version of that work showed that Bentham had made a signal contribution to fundamental problems in the philosophy of law.

Frederick Rosen thinks that the same sort of thing can be said of the *Constitutional Code* in the field of political theory. He claims that it is "a major theoretical work on representative democracy", "the classic text of liberal democracy". Having immersed himself for a long time in this large, unfinished work, and especially in the first volume (the only one published by Bentham himself) as principal editor, Dr Rosen has come to see much that escapes the eye of the normal reader. Whatever we may think of his claims for the value of the book as a text of political theory, we must be grateful to him for providing, in *Jeremy Bentham and Representative Democracy*, a "guide" to the *Code*. We certainly need one on the labyrinthine work. Rosen, having noted at the outset "the numerous obstacles which Bentham places in the path of the most diligent scholar," adds an apt quotation from Leslie Stephen: "In this book Bentham's peculiarities of style reach their highest development, and it cannot be recommended as light reading."

Bentham announces the *Constitutional Code* on the title page as being "for the use of all nations and all governments" professing liberal opinions. It is curious that, with this purpose in mind, he should go into so much detail about the composition of government and administration, based (because Mill said that India was not fit for representative government). This to a considerable extent on British experience and some comparison with

American. But then he was never able to desert from following up all the specifications of a general proposition that occurred to him.

Despite the difficulty of seeing the wood for the trees, Bentham's *Code* does have its interest for political theory. He adds a "constitutive authority", the electorate, to the usual three powers or authorities of legislature, executive (Bentham calls it "administrative"), and judiciary. He sets great store by the political power of public opinion, comparing it with the influence of the Common Law. He assigns sovereignty to the people, meaning the power of the electorate to appoint the legislature and, after petition, to vote for dismissal of individual members and ministers (including the Prime Minister), judges, and functionaries. What of the kind of sovereignty that is possessed by Parliament in the constitution of the United Kingdom? Bentham ascribes to his supreme legislature an "omnipotence", meaning an unlimited power to legislate, unlimited but subject to "checks" such as criticism by the "public opinion tribunal" and the risk of dismissal. He emphasizes the danger of corruption, comparing its prevalence in politics with that of gravity in physics. Public servants are to be appointed after competitive examination and subject to "pecuniary competition", the job going to that qualified candidate who offers to take it at the lowest salary.

Rosen argues that Bentham's proposals for representative government do better than those of James Mill in seeking an identity of interests between rulers and ruled. James Mill relies simply on frequent elections; Bentham extends the franchise to all adult males, restricts re-election of members of the legislature, and allows dismissal by popular vote. Rosen, also, regards Bentham as superior to J. S. Mill because Bentham concentrates on securing "moral and intellectual aptitude" in the ruling class while Mill is concerned with the people as a whole. Rosen's main criticism of Mill's position is that it can lead to paternalism (because education of the people means treating them as pupils) and to the justification of colonialism (because Mill said that India was not fit for representative government). This comment strikes me as radicalism run

riot. Rosen allows that the relation between teacher and pupil "need not be paternalistic" but thinks it is more likely to be so with adult pupils. As for Mill's remarks about India, Rosen does not stop to consider that they at least have the merit of arising from empirical knowledge, unlike much of Bentham's theorizing.

Although Bentham's contributions to the theory of law and government rested upon the ethical theory of utilitarianism, he did not make an equally valuable contribution to ethical theory itself. His criticisms of opponents in that field depend on knockabout ridicule and often on ignorance of what they really said, and his defence of utilitarianism overlooks the checks in its armour. Bentham's importance in the history of utilitarianism lies in altering its aim from pure to applied science and in stimulating J. S. Mill and then Sidgwick to develop the theory more effectively.

The *Deontology* volume, which belongs to ethical theory, has two main features of interest. Its editor, Amnon Goldworth, draws attention to the first, a recognition by Bentham in middle age of "the ubiquitous director of the social affection of sympathy or benevolence", which he added as an additional "sentience" to the four listed in his *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*. In consequence, "ipsedixitism" (the "principle of caprice") takes the place of "the principle of sympathy and antipathy" as each-al name for alternatives to utilitarianism.

The second feature of interest is classification, of motives in the *Table of the Springs of Action* and of virtues in *Deontology*. Bentham evidently thought that classification marked an important scientific advance. "The Linnaeus of Ethics is yet to come," he wrote when essaying *Deontology* a classification of the virtues. The phrase recalls an earlier would-be scientific ambition when he wrote in a letter that the Newton of the moral world was yet to come.

It seems to me that Bentham's detailed classification of the virtues does not in fact add to our understanding of ethics. His main classification into three cardinal virtues has potential but proves to be disappointing. The three cardinal

(intrinsically useful) virtues are prudence, which is self-regarding, and probity and beneficence, both of which are other-regarding. Probity differs from beneficence in being thought obligatory. Probity is virtually identical with justice, the difference between them being "grammatical" (a matter of usage), of logical or ethical. Bentham says nothing of the special features of the concept of justice as fairness and remains blind to the difficulties which it poses for the theory of utilitarianism.

The editing of both the Bentham volumes calls for warm congratulation. Textual material and editorial comment alike give the reader a sense that he could reasonably ask for and do not irritate with unnecessary clutter. Professor Goldworth has a particularly difficult task in working out the best method of presenting *Deontology* (markedly different from the version written up by John Bowring in his own words and published in 1838), since the manuscripts of the different sections often given no clear indication of their relation to each other. Bentham would be gratified to know that American scholars are now playing no large part as British in the project of editing his works.

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# Theatre history in microform

**Julie Hankey**

Modern English Drama was published in 1973.



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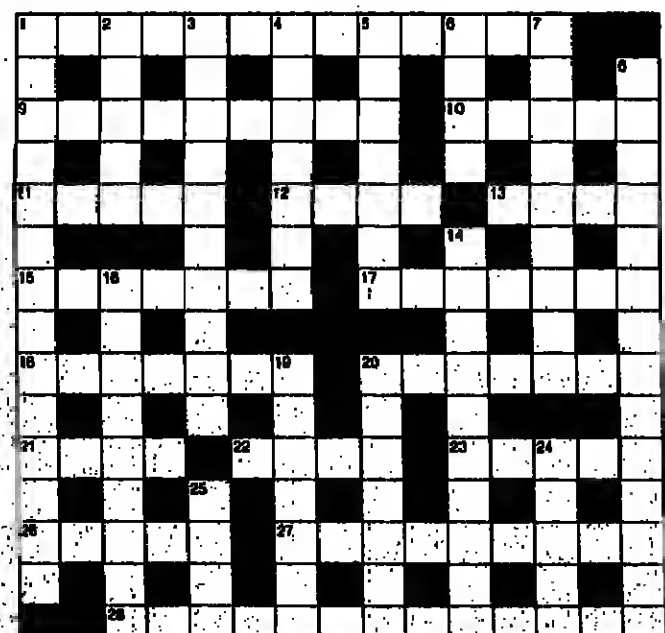
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## TLS Crossword No 12

A prize of £10 is offered for the first correct solution opened on September 16. Answers should be addressed to TLS Crossword, Priory House, St John's Lane, London EC1M 4BX. Of four solutions received to Crossword No 11, the only correct one was submitted by Marjorie Newbolt, Green Banks, Cleve-next-the-Sea, Norfolk.



## ACROSS

- 1 School for Scandal with a one-eyed head (9,4)
- 9 Consistible or good-bird? (9)
- 10 She turned into a fountain and cried (5)
- 11 Brief time to enchant (5)
- 12 California, Part Two - not Treasure Island (4)
- 13 Selwyn Jepson's Idiom of Paradise: bread, wine, verse and no initial (4)
- 15 As one turned into stone, weeping pitifully (7)
- 17 Horatio's description as in book of the Dead (7)
- 18 Stephen, a patriot regardless (7)
- 20 Villain prepared to do in John Brown (7)
- 21 There is a Venetian trial play (4)
- 22 A scolding victory according to Milton (4)
- 23 A Christian watched, said James (5)
- 24 From an American poet about a day (5)
- 25 In Shakespeare, in Baudelaire and Eliot (9)
- 26 Lack of meaning in Jane's hair (11)

## DOWN

- 3 Mrs Peirce's hand in book by Hardy (10)
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- 8 Noxious drugs, and erring sedants (14)
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- 19 Ed. II? Note the descendants (7)
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## Solutions to Crossword No 11

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